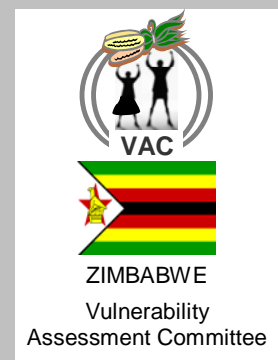
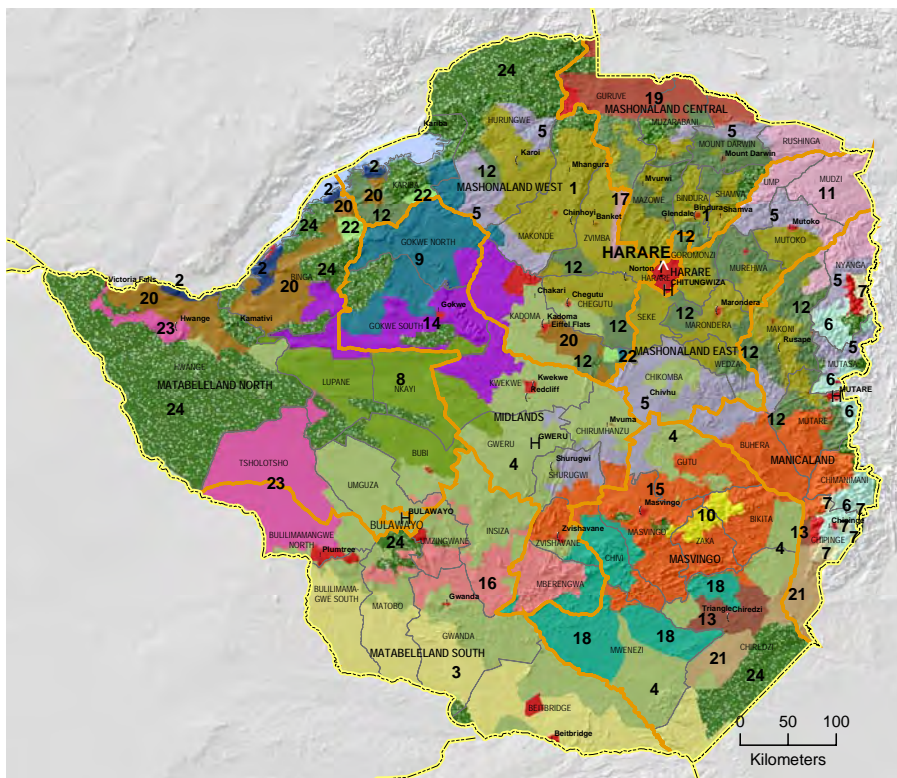


Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

September 2005



With support from:



**USAID
FEWS NET**

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Acknowledgements

ZimVAC and FEWSNET would like to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of both national and provincial representatives of Ministries of Lands and Agricultural Development, Local Government, Labour, Public Services and Social Welfare and Health, who actively participated in the collection and review of the data and information used in the production the Zimbabwe Livelihoods Profiles.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Introduction

Introduction

The livelihood profiles that follow document how rural populations of Zimbabwe live. *A livelihood* is the sum of ways in which households make ends meet from year to year, and how they survive (or fail to survive) through difficult times.

There is increasing interest in using livelihoods analysis as the ‘lens’ through which to view a number of problems. These problems range from emergency response to disaster mitigation to longer term development. This interest rests upon two basic observations:

- 1) Information about a given area or community can only be properly interpreted if it is put into context with how people live.
- 2) Interventions can only be designed in ways appropriate to local circumstances if the planner knows about local livelihoods and whether or not a proposed intervention will build upon or undermine existing strategies.

Two main products are offered here:

National Livelihood Zone Map

The map shows the division of the country into homogeneous zones defined according to a livelihoods framework.

Livelihood Zone Profiles

The profiles describe the major characteristics of each zone, including a brief differentiation of the food security status of different wealth groups. There is some emphasis on hazards and the relative capacity of different types of households in different places to withstand them.

In compiling the profiles, a balance has been struck between accessibility and level of detail. The aim has been to present sufficient information to allow a rounded and balanced view of livelihoods nationally. The profiles provide a rapid introduction to livelihoods in the country; they do not offer localized detail.

The preparation of these profiles was a joint activity between the USAID Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) and the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC). The ZimVAC is composed of government ministries, NGOs and United Nations agencies working in the areas of food security, poverty reduction and development in Zimbabwe. ZimVAC’s mission is to contribute to the formulation and implementation of effective policies and emergency and development programs through a system of improved, co-coordinated and demand-driven vulnerability assessments and analysis. It is a subcommittee of the Social Services Cabinet Action Committee (SSCAC). The main focus of FEWS NET’s work is early warning, food security monitoring and emergency assessment. The profiles are based on the risk mapping of Zimbabwe conducted by Save the Children (UK) in 1996. Data collected from a series of provincial workshops were conducted in 2003 was used to update descriptions of livelihood zones and profiles produced in the earlier exercise. The updates were reviewed by a national workshop that was held in October 2004.

The livelihood profiles have been structured primarily with early warning activities in mind. However, it is hoped that they will also prove useful to the wider development community.

This document is divided into 3 main sections.

- **Introduction**—This has 6 sub-sections:
 - **The Uses of the Profiles**--which describe 3 main ways the profiles can be used.
 - **Key Concepts**--which defines the key concepts used in livelihoods based analysis.
 - **Introduction to the Food Economy Approach**--which outlines the analytical framework that has helped define the key information to be included in the profiles.
 - **The National Livelihood Zone Map**—which introduces the concept of livelihood zones.
 - **What is in a Livelihood Profile**—which describes the layout and content of each profile.
 - **Methodology**—which describes the methods used to develop the map and profiles.
- **National Overview**— The national livelihood zone map, together with a national overview of livelihoods in Zimbabwe.
- **The Livelihood Zone Profiles**—The profiles for each zone.

The Uses of the Profiles

The Zimbabwe livelihood zoning and profiles presented here offer an analysis of urban and rural food security on a geographical basis. Zimbabwe is divided into 23 relatively homogeneous zones defined according to a livelihoods framework. A brief description of each zone is provided, including an analysis of the position of different wealth groups within the zone. It is envisaged that the profiles will be useful on three levels, as follows.

1. An introductory guide to food security in Zimbabwe

The profiles pack considerable information and analysis into a few pages of presentation. They should therefore form a useful briefing for a newcomer who needs to get a quick grasp of food security conditions around the country. The geographical divisions are relatively small—as far as this is consistent with ground realities—so that the reader can take in the general pattern and the basic differences between areas and populations.

Development planners can also benefit from using the livelihood profiles. One objective of development is to reduce people's vulnerability to hazard and to increase their capacity to cope. An important first step is to understand who is vulnerable, to which hazards, and why. Likewise, efforts to reduce poverty require an understanding of how the poorest households survive in different areas of the country and the reasons for their poverty.

2. Early warning and food security monitoring

Most early warning and food security monitoring systems draw heavily from two information sources: (i) crop and/or livestock production data; and (ii) market price information. Given the predominance of production data, local food security is often equated with production outcomes. Hence, a chronic or temporary production deficit against local food requirement is immediately translated into chronic or temporary food insecurity.

This is almost never the whole story. A full account of the food economy addresses both food supply—that is, what food people produce—and food demand—what food people buy, and how they earn cash to buy it. Thus, data on casual employment or wild foods, or charity from relatives or the sale of handicrafts is equally important to the livelihood story as data on crop and livestock production.

Using a baseline livelihood profile, we can then inquire into household capacity to adapt to economic stress, especially failed crop or livestock production; and we can appreciate household activities at different periods in the yearly cycle. All of which feeds directly into our analysis of need, helping to answer key questions such as; which areas and what types of household are likely to cope should a hazard strike and which will need assistance? What types of intervention will be most appropriate, and when and for how long should they be implemented?

Thus for instance one could point to the position of poor households in a given geographical area who are highly dependent on urban employment. If urban employment declines, their labor will be less in demand: can they find alternative income elsewhere – and will they be competing with people from other zones in these activities?

National officers working within their national early warning system have an immense knowledge of their countries. The livelihoods approach helps to provide a framework for the full use of that knowledge, as well as adding a new level of information to it.

3. Policy Development

Disaster management has been the main impetus to the spread of early warning systems. The rationale in early warning is to improve the efficiency in the scale and timing of emergency food aid. However, increasingly planners are looking at alternatives to food aid in early emergency intervention—and this often requires changes in policy and practice. A case in point is the stabilization of market prices for basic foods. Livelihoods analysis can expose the likely effects of such interventions on different households' capacity to survive a crisis. The analysis can also recommend the optimum timing for intervention.

Livelihood analysis can also be applied to other policy changes. For example, if government taxes on paraffin were reduced, or charges made for government veterinary drugs, what would be the impact on households? More generally, the household viewpoint offers a more secure footing for looking at the increasingly voluminous discussion of poverty alleviation. It allows one to look at the story which lies behind national statistics.

Key Concepts

Risk, hazard, vulnerability and need have well-established meanings in the context of disaster management. They are, however, frequently misused in the context of food security. The meaning of these terms is perhaps best explained with an example (see below).

Defining Risk, Hazard, Vulnerability and Need

- Drought is a major **hazard** affecting crop and livestock production in many African countries.
- Poor households are more **vulnerable** to (i.e. less able to cope with) drought than better-off households; they have fewer reserves of food or cash to fall back on, and fewer options for generating additional income.
- Poor households living in drought-prone areas of the country are more **at risk** of a food shortage than other households because they are both exposed to and vulnerable to the drought hazard.
- Once a drought strikes, the poor are the most **in need** of food assistance.

To be at risk of food deficits you must both be exposed to a hazard, as well as be vulnerable to that hazard, as in the case of poor households in the drought-prone areas of the country in the above example. Because vulnerability is so closely linked to hazard, it follows that there is no general state of vulnerability; people can only be vulnerable *to something*. For example, farmers cultivating along a river margin may be vulnerable to flood (which is likely to wash away their crops), but may not be vulnerable to drought (since they can irrigate their crops using water from the river). Likewise, pastoralists may not be very vulnerable to drought provided they can move freely in search of water and grazing. They may, on the other hand, be highly vulnerable to conflict if that inhibits their movement to key water points and grazing areas.

Mathematically, the relationship between risk (R), vulnerability (V) and hazard (H) can be summarized as:

R = f (H,V) Where:

R = likelihood of a negative outcome (e.g. food deficit)

H = likelihood of exposure to a hazard (e.g. drought)

V = likelihood that people will not be able to cope with a defined hazard.

Once a hazard has struck, it no longer makes sense to talk about vulnerable groups. Put simply, people are **vulnerable before the event**, (since this refers to their ability to cope should a hazard strike). They are **in need after the event** (i.e., those actually affected by and unable to cope with a hazard). Going back to the drought example, the poor are vulnerable to drought before the rains fail, but once they have lost their crops or livestock they are in need of assistance.

A different approach is required to assess food needs once a hazard has actually struck. One of the most widely used livelihoods-based approaches is the food or household economy approach, first developed by Save the Children UK in the 1990s¹. This is described further in the next section.

Introduction to the Food Economy Approach

There is one basic principle underlying the food economy approach. This principle states that:

an analysis of local livelihoods is essential for a proper understanding of the impact— at household level - of hazards such as drought or conflict or market dislocation.

Total crop failure may, for example, leave one group of households destitute because the failed crop is their only source of staple food. Another group, by contrast, may be able to cope because they have alternative food and income sources. These alternative sources—such as livestock to sell or relatives elsewhere who can assist--can make up the production shortfall. Thus, effective hazard impact assessments must be based on livelihood analysis, and livelihood analysis itself involves several steps (see table below).

The Livelihood Zone Map: Patterns of livelihood clearly vary from one area to another. Local factors such as climate, soil, access to markets etc. all influence livelihood patterns. The first step in a food economy analysis is therefore to prepare a **livelihood zone map**. This map delineates geographical areas within which people share basically the same patterns of access to food (i.e. they grow the same crops, keep the same types of livestock, etc.) and have the same access to markets. An example of a livelihood zone map based on information gathered from southern Mozambique is presented on page 5.

¹ See 'The Household Economy Approach', Seaman J., Clarke P., Boudreau T., Holt J., Save the Children UK 2000.

The Wealth Breakdown: Where a household lives is one factor determining its options for obtaining food and generating income. Another factor is wealth, since this is the major factor determining the ability of a household to exploit the available options within a given zone. It is obvious, for example, that better-off households owning larger farms will in general produce more crops and be more food secure than their poorer neighbors. Land is just one aspect of wealth, however, and wealth groups are typically defined in terms of their land holdings, livestock holdings, capital, education, skills, labor availability and/or social capital. Defining the different wealth groups in each zone is the second step in a food economy analysis, the output from which is a **wealth breakdown**.

The Food Economy Baseline: Having grouped households according to where they live and their wealth, the next step is to generate **food economy baseline** information for typical households in each group for a defined reference or baseline year. Food access is determined by investigating the sum of ways households obtain food — what food they grow, gather or receive as gifts, how much food they buy, how much cash income is earned in a year, and what other essential needs must be met with income earned.

Household Coping (or Response) Strategies: Once this baseline is established, an analysis can be made of the likely impact of a shock or hazard in a bad year. This is done by assessing how food access will be affected by the shock, what other food sources can be added or expanded to make up for initial shortages, and what final deficits emerge.

Outcome Analysis: The objective is to investigate the effects of a hazard on *future* access to food and income, so that decisions can be taken about the most appropriate types of intervention to implement. The rationale behind the approach is that a good understanding of how people have survived in the past provides a sound basis for projecting into the future. Three types of information are combined; (i) information on baseline access, (ii) information on hazard (i.e. factors affecting access to food/income, such as crop production or market prices) and (iii) information on response strategies (i.e. the sources of food and income that people turn to when exposed to a hazard). The approach can be summarized as follows:

$$\text{Baseline} + \text{Hazard} + \text{Response} = \text{Outcome}$$

The idea is that once the baselines have been compiled they can be used repeatedly over a number of years - until significant changes in the underlying economy render them invalid. A good food economy baseline will generally be valid for between 3 and 10 years. What varies is the prevailing level of food security, but this is a function of variations in hazard, not variations in the baseline. Put another way, the level of maize production may vary from year to year (hazard), but the underlying pattern of agricultural production does not (the baseline).

The food economy analytical framework described here sets out the types of information and analysis that are required to understand the impact of a hazard on food security and local livelihoods. As much of this information as possible has been included in the current profiles. However, the profiles do not contain all the information required to complete the full quantitative outcome analysis described in the graphic on page 4. This requires a further step, which is the development of a full food economy baseline². The national livelihood zone map and livelihood profiles are designed as a stand-alone product (see section on Uses of the Profiles), but they are also intended as an intermediate step towards the development of a full food economy baseline.

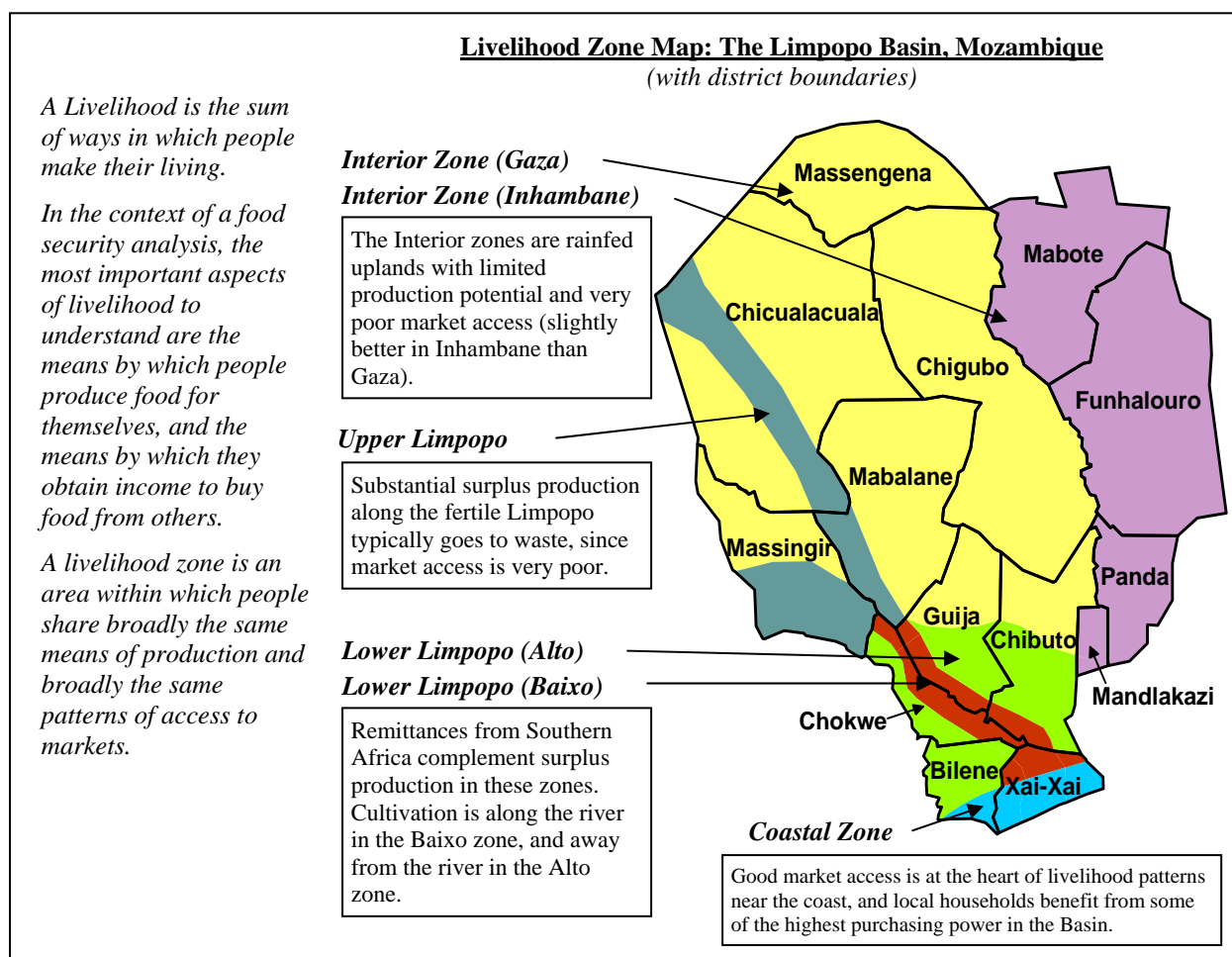
² A full food economy baseline provides quantitative information on food, income and expenditure for at least three main wealth groups within a livelihood zone. Taken together these baseline data provide detailed information on the *amounts* of food accessed and the *amounts* of cash income generated from different sources by typical households living at different levels of wealth. The livelihood profiles, in contrast, include information on the *proportional contribution* of different sources of food and cash income to the whole. Put simply, the units of measurement for a food economy baseline are kilocalories (i.e. food energy) and cash, whereas the unit of measurement for a livelihood profile is percentage of total.

<u>Outcome Analysis: Baseline + Hazard + Response = Outcome</u>				
<p>The baseline picture provides a starting point or context for understanding the likely impact of a shock or hazard on food access at household level.</p> <p>If, for example, ‘poor’ households are heavily dependent upon crop production, then they may be vulnerable to hazards affecting crops, such as drought or pest attack. Households that rely upon other sources of food and income are, on the other hand, less vulnerable to these hazards.</p>	<p>The first step is to superimpose the hazard on the baseline to assess its effects on food access at household level.</p> <p>This requires that the hazard be expressed in quantitative terms, e.g. a 50% reduction in crop production, a 20% reduction in milk output, etc.</p> <p>In the example below, a 50% reduction in crop production results in a 25% deficit in food access for the ‘poor’, since crops provide half of baseline food needs for this group.</p>	<p>The second step is to consider the response strategies that can be pursued by households exposed to a hazard, and the amount of food and/or income that can be generated from these.</p> <p>In the example, the ‘poor’ keep from 3-5 goats, and in a crisis can exchange 2 of these for 1-2 sacks of grain – enough to cover roughly 10% of annual food needs. This has the effect of reducing the deficit from 25% to roughly 15%.</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Baseline</p>	+	<p style="text-align: center;">Hazard e.g. 50% crop failure</p>	+	<p style="text-align: center;">Response e.g. sale of 2 goats</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">= Outcome</p> <p>The outcome represents the final result, expressed in terms of the food intake deficit likely to result from a particular hazard, once household-level responses have been taken into account.</p> <p>In the example, the conclusion is that a 50% crop failure is likely to result in a food intake deficit of 15% for ‘poor’ households. Similar analyses undertaken for other types of household (e.g. the ‘middle’ and the ‘better-off’) will indicate their vulnerability to this particular hazard.</p>				

The National Livelihood Zone Map

Livelihood Zone Maps: A livelihood zone is an area within which people share broadly the same patterns of access to food (i.e. they grow the same crops, keep the same types of livestock, etc.). They also share broadly the same access to markets.

Livelihood zone boundaries do not always follow administrative boundaries. Instead, a river or mountain range may be the boundary for a livelihood zone. In this way, one administrative zone may contain different livelihood zones, such as agro-pastoralists living alongside fishing communities. Conversely, one livelihood zone may cover several administrative zones. Yet, it is important that livelihood zone boundaries should wherever possible follow lower level administrative boundaries. The main reason is because resources are allocated on the basis of administrative units not livelihood zones.



What is in a Livelihood Profile

The profiles are divided up into a number of sections:

- **Main Conclusions and Implications** summarizes the main findings from the zone. This section also provide insights that will inform the planning of various types of intervention, including emergency response, disaster mitigation and development programming.
- **Zone description** offers a general description of local livelihood patterns (crop production, livestock rearing, off-farm income generation etc.).
- **The Markets** section contains basic information on the marketing of local production and on any importation of staple food into the zone.
- **Seasonal Calendar** sets out the timing of key activities during the year. This is useful in a variety of ways, e.g. to judge the likely impact of a hazard according to its timing during the year, or to assess whether a particular activity is being undertaken at the normal time in the current year.
- The **Wealth Breakdown** section describes three main wealth groups ('poor', 'middle' and 'better-off'), explaining the differences between these groups and how this affects potential access to food and cash income³.
- The **Sources of Food** and **Sources of Cash** sections examine patterns of food and income access at each level of wealth, relating these to the characteristics of each group.
- The sections on **Hazards** provide information on the different types of hazard that affect the zone, differentiated by wealth group where this is appropriate.
- **Response Strategies** describe the various strategies available to different types of household in the zone, together with a judgment of the likely effectiveness of the strategies⁴.
- Early warning involves identifying and interpreting key events that indicate that a severe food shortage or famine may be developing. The final section, **Indicators of Imminent Crisis**, draws upon the classification of early warning indicators proposed by Fred Cuny⁵. This section provides information on the key indicators and their likely timing by zone, based upon an understanding of local livelihoods and local patterns of response to food shortage⁶.

³ It is important to bear in mind for this analysis that we are thinking of wealth in relative (and local) terms. Statistical data may indicate that 80% or even 90% of the population in a particular area lives below the national poverty line, but this is measuring poverty on a national, absolute scale. In a livelihoods analysis we are interested in understanding some of the differences between different groups within the community and the reasons for these – in which case it is not particularly useful to lump 80% or 90% of the population together into one group.

⁴ The term response strategy is preferred to coping strategy for two reasons. Firstly, the term coping strategy is often used to refer to regular components of everyday livelihood (e.g. firewood sale), which strictly speaking are only coping strategies when intensified in response to a hazard. Secondly, 'coping' can be taken to imply that the strategy in question is cost-free, which is not always the case.

⁵ 'Famine, Conflict and Response: A Basic Guide', Cuny F. C. and Hill R. B. Kumarian Press, 1999, pp 33-42.

⁶ Fred Cuny identified two types of early warning indicator, those that provide advance warning of a famine (indicators of imminent crisis) and those that confirm the existence of famine (indicators of famine). The latter group includes indicators such as distress sales of productive assets (e.g. plough oxen), consumption of seeds, increased malnutrition and increased mortality. Indicators of famine are not generally context specific (i.e. a single list could be prepared that would apply to all livelihood zones). They are also of little use in predicting or preventing severe food shortage or famine. For these reasons they have not been included in the livelihood profiles.

Methodology

The livelihood zone map and profiles presented here have been compiled through a combination of field work and reference to existing secondary data sources. One major secondary source is SC/UK's Risk Map Report for Zimbabwe (1996). In the last few years, certain sections of the 1996 report have been updated. For instance, SC/UK continues to carry out field work to refine and add to the 1996 food economy baseline data. In particular, their work detailing the conditions of mine workers in Mutorashanga, and household food access in Binga—an isolated and very poor zone in western Zimbabwe—exemplify recent work by SC/UK to update the food economy data base. In several instances, the ZimVAC (Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee) also collected field information on household food access during the annual needs assessment. Livelihood zone boundaries and profile summaries were updated in March 2003 during a nation-wide series of workshops held in each province. This was a ZimVAC undertaking, led by FEWS NET.

As noted above, the FEWS NET livelihoods approach that underpins these Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles draws its conceptual framework from Household Economy Analysis (HEA). HEA was originally developed to provide a detailed understanding of household livelihood patterns, with a particular focus on access to food and income, and expenditure patterns as shown by different wealth groups within the population. This understanding then informs the identification and design of appropriate emergency (food and non-food) and development interventions. As a food security early warning activity, however, FEWS NET has tailored this livelihoods approach so that it yields maximum value for early warning and food security monitoring and analysis in resource-constrained settings. FEWS NET Livelihood Profiles are not intended to be used in isolation to assess population needs or design programs. They are intended to be a valuable tool in the early warning food security analysis toolbox, that should complement (and contextualize) other food security-related data, including nutritional monitoring data, agricultural production, market prices, etc. Used in this way, Livelihood Profiles enable the food security analyst to better understand current shocks against the context of what is locally normal in a given population, and with knowledge of how households are likely to respond to a range of events. On this basis we are better able to identify a potential food security crisis in the right population, at the right time, based upon a sound livelihoods-based understanding, to prompt quick follow-up assessment and action – in other words, to do more effective early warning. While these Livelihood Profiles do not provide the level of statistical confidence or highly localized data to play the major role in detailed local program planning, they are invaluable for helping to rapidly identify a developing crisis, to effectively target more in-depth assessments and thereby to promote a quicker response to population needs.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

National Overview

The National Economy

Zimbabwe's economy is mainly comprised of agriculture, mining, and manufacturing activities. However, agriculture plays a critical role in the overall development of the country. As of 1998, agriculture contributed 11-14% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), provided employment for 70% of the population, and contributed 60% of industrial raw materials and 45% of exports.⁷ Zimbabwe is divided into five Natural Regions based on agro-ecological potential, descending from the prime lands in Natural Region I, which are primarily devoted to dairy, forestry, tea and coffee-production, to Natural Region V where infertile soil and dry weather conditions make agricultural production very risky, but more suited for animal husbandry. At Independence in 1980, Zimbabwe inherited a dual agriculture economy, consisting of a highly productive, highly skilled and mechanized large-scale commercial farming sector mainly located in areas with good soil and favorable rainfall patterns between Natural Regions I and III, alongside a low skilled, low productivity, communal agriculture sector mainly located in dry and infertile regions in Natural Regions III, IV, and V.



Approximately 65% of the population of Zimbabwe resides in rural areas⁸. Principal livelihood activities are crop production (food and cash crops), animal husbandry, and employment on commercial farming estates, with limited off farm economic activities. Major food crops are cereals (maize, wheat, sorghum and millet), and vegetables; major cash crops are cotton, sugar, tobacco, and horticultural produce (tomatoes, potatoes, pepper and baby corn). The biggest threat to rural livelihoods is drought, which occurs about 1-3 years of every 10 years. The worst drought in living memory was experienced between 1991 and 1992, and the most recent drought was in 2001-2. The prevalence of drought and limited access to productive resources have restricted the expansion of rural incomes. Access to irrigation, land, draught power, and mechanization permits the better off households to engage in horticultural cash crop production. Major markets for cereals, cotton and tobacco are government marketing boards, private companies and local markets, while horticultural products, sugar, tea, timber and coffee are primarily for export.

Zimbabwe's economy has progressively stagnated over the past 40 years. Between 1965 and 1996, economic growth averaged 4% per annum against the backdrop of a 3% annual population growth. By 1990, despite a hefty 46% of GDP investment on social expenditure in health and education, per capita income was only 7% higher than in 1980. A significant shift from state-led economic development was signaled in 1990 with the inception of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) recommended Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP) which liberalized the economy and set it on an export led development path. ESAP did not produce the anticipated growth. By 1997 manufacturing production was 13% below the peak 1991 levels, and GDP per capita was 7.5% below 1975 levels⁹. The decline in GDP worsened from 4% in 1999 to 13% in 2002¹⁰. Inflation reached a peak of 623% in January 2005.

The most significant change to Zimbabwe's social and economic structure was the initiation of the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) fast track land reform program in June 2002. Land was acquired from primarily white large scale commercial farmers for redistribution to predominantly black Zimbabweans. Compensation for acquired land was deferred to the former colonial power, Britain. Polarization on appropriate reform methodology compromised the potential efficacy of land reform as a poverty alleviation strategy. Resettled farmers were constrained by limited support services to ensure full utilization of acquired land.

⁷ Zimbabwe Human Development Report (ZHDR): Poverty, 1998, p 23.

⁸ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report. Available: www.undp.org/statistics/data/countries.cfm?c=zwe. Accessed : September 14, 2005.

⁹ Zimbabwe Human Development Report, 1998 : 17, 13, 26, 19).

¹⁰ International Monetary Fund, Zimbabwe Selected Issues and Statistical Appendix. 2003: 6.

The increase in poverty is compounded by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. An estimated 25-30% of the productive 15-49 year old age group is living with HIV. HIV has lowered life expectancy from 61 years in 1990 to 43 years presently. An estimated 2,000 people die of HIV/AIDS related illnesses every week. Women become infected at a younger age, and presently, HIV prevalence among young women below the age of 20 is five times higher than their male counterparts.¹¹ In addition, there are an estimated 980,000 AIDS orphans, and 56,000 children who are HIV positive¹².

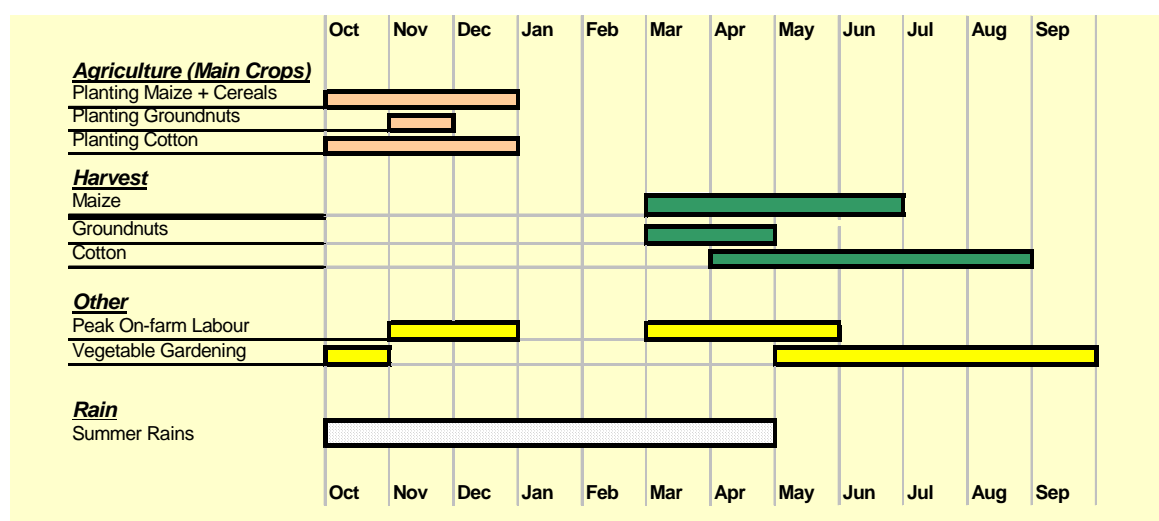
Recent changes in monetary policy and financial sector regulation have significantly slowed down the economic meltdown. Inflation has declined to 133%, and there is relative currency stabilization although a dual exchange rate still exists on the unofficial parallel market where the Zimbabwe dollar trades for between Z\$9,000-12,000 with the US dollar and the official market where it trades for Z\$6,200 to the US dollar.

Geography and Climate

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country with a total area of 390,580 square kilometers. It shares borders with South Africa to the south, Botswana to the southwest, Mozambique to the east, and Zambia to the northwest. Much of central and northern Zimbabwe sits on a high plateau 900 m above sea level. The central plateau offers prime agricultural land, moderate temperatures and summer rainfall that support a diversified base of food and cash crops. On either side of the central plateau lies the middleveld. This middleveld is surrounded by the lowveld which is about 500 m below sea level. To the north, on the border with Mozambique and Zambia, lies the Zambezi Valley, a hot, humid region that supports a mixed agricultural base of maize and cotton. To the northwest, bordering Zambia stretches the hot, dry Kariba Valley. These lowland areas receive no winter rain and summer rainfall is erratic and infrequent. In the south lies the flat, lowland savannah forming part of the Limpopo River basin. Commercial ranches and small-holder agro-pastoralism are the main features of the southern Zimbabwe economy. On average, a drought occurs an average 1-3 years of every 10 years in Zimbabwe. In the east the central plateau rises to form the Eastern Highlands, a mountainous border range between Zimbabwe and Mozambique. Good soils and sufficient rainfall in this region provide excellent agricultural conditions for intensive farming and the commercial lumber industry.

Seasonal Calendar

The seasonal calendar below represents general trends in the agricultural sector across the country. The planting season for the main crops occurs between October and December. The maize harvest takes place predominantly between March and June. The summer rainy season typically starts in late October and ends in April. Lowland regions receive less rainfall while storms are more irregular and more infrequent as compared to the middleveld/highveld. The main hunger season for farmers falls between September and January when on-farm labor demands peak.



¹¹ Professor E Gomo at the launch of the Zimbabwe Human Development Report 2003, on HIV/AIDS, 6 May 2003.

¹² UNAIDS/UNICEF/USAID.Children on the Brink: A Joint Report of New Orphan Estimates and a Framework for Action, July 2004: 26.

Changes in Rural Livelihoods

Macroeconomic instability (negative economic growth rate, declining investment and productivity, high inflation), the effects of HIV/AIDS, and a multi-year drought have all combined to negatively affect the national economy. The effects of these factors trickle down to impact the household capacity to access adequate food. The household resilience that was demonstrated during the 1991-2 drought has been significantly eroded, and smaller shocks now have bigger impacts on precarious livelihoods. Three factors will likely result in shifts in household livelihood patterns:

(1) Transformation of the large scale commercial agricultural sector

Prior to 2000, 1.3 million people including farm owner and farm worker households, lived on and off 4,660 large-scale commercial farms covering 10 million hectares (ha), while over 1 million households (5.6 million people) in the communal areas subsisted on 1.6 million ha¹³. This inequity has always placed land reform at the centre of GoZ poverty alleviation and development strategy. The fast track resettlement program was implemented using the A1 model for reducing land pressure in overcrowded communal lands, and the A2 model which intended to create a black commercial farming sector. By July 2003, the A1 model redistributed 2,652 farms with a combined area of 3,231,080 hectares to 127,192 households. The A2 model benefited 7,260 applicants from 1,672 farms with a total area of 2,198,814 ha. Meanwhile, 1323 white farmers remained with 1,377 farms totaling 1,175,607 ha¹⁴.

In some cases, the change of farm ownership interrupted the production cycles of the outgoing commercial farmers, and resulted in reduced employment for commercial farm workers. This had negative consequences on the livelihoods of roughly 350,000 farm workers who were dependent on income from farm employment and on the lost export earnings. Optimal conditions for land transfers and utilization were impaired by what the Presidential Land Review Committee reported as the “haphazard manner” in which the resettlement process took place in parts of Mashonaland West, and the “haphazard demarcations in districts like Chimanimani, Chipinge and Nyanga”¹⁵.

The rationale for GoZ land redistribution is to promote equity and intensify production, in order to boost both food security and equitable economic growth. However, significant investment needs to be made towards enhancing the potential of the resettled farmers. Specifically there is a need to take determined strides to facilitate access to farming inputs, building skills capacity to promote participation in high value cash crops for local and export markets, and providing access to credit facilities that will permit mechanization and acquisition of irrigation equipment. Providing basic services like health care and education facilities will improve the incentives for eventual relocation and full utilization of redistributed land.

(2) Economic downturn

The present climate of economic decline has immediate effects on people’s normal ways of accessing food and income. For example, fuel shortages and high fuel costs disrupt the transport and marketing of crops to distant high value national or export markets. To offset loss of income, farmers may replace cash crops with food crops or replace lost income with other cash work. Demand for labor will decline as rising input costs and transport costs will reduce the capacity of the well off households to hire additional labor- which could lead to a decline in production. Rural livelihoods will also be affected by a probable increase in migration to urban areas. Economic hardships triggered a 5% annual increase in the urban population, increasing 63% from 2 million in 1982 to 3.2 million in 1992. The flow of remittances to rural areas will likely decline as urban households increasingly squeezed will have less to spare for the rural extended family ties.

The biggest threat to livelihood improvements is inflation and the price increases of food and other basic commodities, which in themselves, are symptoms of fundamental macro economic disequilibria. The threat of inflation is compounded by falling real incomes and a 70% unemployment rate¹⁶. The hardships induced by unemployment and falling incomes force people to resort to negative coping strategies such as commercial sex work, criminal activities, gold panning and selling assets. Negative coping strategies endanger the long term prospects for livelihood recovery.

(3) HIV and AIDS

When HIV strikes a household, two of the immediate consequences are: (i) a rise in health costs and (ii) a drop in labor supply. These two factors will in turn affect expenditure patterns and levels of cash earnings. At the macroeconomic level, the cost of HIV

¹³ Zimbabwe Human Development Report 1998: 32.

¹⁴ Report of the Presidential Land Review Committee. Volume One: Main Report, August 2003, p2.

¹⁵ Ibid, p5, p74.

¹⁶ CIA World Factbook. Available: <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/zi.html>. Accessed : September 14, 2005.

related health care costs is estimated to increase to 3.5% of GDP by 2010.¹⁷ Losses in income limit the amount of agricultural inputs (seed, fertilizer and pesticide) that the household can buy, and this further compromises household food production. This triggers a chain of negative reactions that undermine every form of capital available to the household, leaving households with a diminished capacity to deal with shocks which may arise that are not related to HIV such as drought, or economic decline.

Orphans created by the epidemic often have to depend on the elderly for support. In a study carried out by Mutangadura (2000), grandparents accounted for 52% of households that had taken in orphans. An additional study was undertaken to inquire into the role social ties played in coping with the increased burden resulting from the high number of HIV related deaths. The results showed that 89% of households in the study were finding it difficult to get help from relatives and friends because they too were responding to HIV related hardships. Attention needs to be focused on the gender dynamics of HIV/AIDS. A study conducted on households in which the mother had died from an HIV/IDS related illness, indicated that there was a resulting decrease in school attendance, loss of assets, increase in the work burden among surviving children, and a “[decrease in] consumption of most of the food commodities.”¹⁸ This decrease in food consumption is attributable to the central role played by women in the household. They support the family and participate in food production and preparation.

The Rural Livelihood Zones

The National Livelihood Zone Map of Zimbabwe demarcates 23 livelihood zones. This level of disaggregation provides useful detail for planners working at regional and district levels. More broadly, the livelihood zones fall into eight main types.

- **The Eastern Highveld Commercial Zone:** Export crops such as tea and coffee are grown. The lumber industry is the other main commercial activity in the region.
- **Mid/Highveld Communal Zones:** Densely populated and intensively farmed, maize is popular but is one crop of many in a region that is well-suited to a range of food and cash crops. A second season of winter wheat provides an additional harvest during the year.
- **Mid/Highveld Commercial Zones:** Maize, winter wheat, tobacco and vegetables are grown for export on the large-scale commercial farms. The land redistribution changes the landscape of this zone extensively.
- **Middleveld Communal Zones:** Middleveld agriculture is dominated by maize and millet (the food crops), and groundnuts, sorghum and some cotton or paprika (the cash crops). Better-off farmers earn cash mainly from crop and livestock sales. The poor make ends meet mainly from daily wage work and gold panning.
- **Mid/Lowveld Cotton Zones:** Agriculture is a riskier proposition in the drier lowlands. Maize is the chief food crop; cotton the chief cash crop. The proportional importance of maize or cotton varies within the mid/lowveld “cotton” zones. Livestock sales, gold panning and daily wage work provide essential income for food purchases.
- **Lowveld Commercial Ranches:** Large-scale game and cattle ranches have given way to more mixed agriculture (cattle, game, and maize) as the new A2 commercial and A1 family farmers take possession of the resettled land in south-central Zimbabwe.
- **Lowveld Agro-Pastoral Zones:** Only one zone in the south (Beitbridge lowveld) is most accurately described as agro-pastoral. The other lowveld economies (such as in the Kariba Valley) have a crop-livestock economic base that is increasingly propped up by remittances, local wage work and gold panning.
- **Irrigated Commercial Zones:** Relatively small, these pockets of irrigated commercial production of fruit, sugar cane, and cotton provide a profitable addition to national exports.

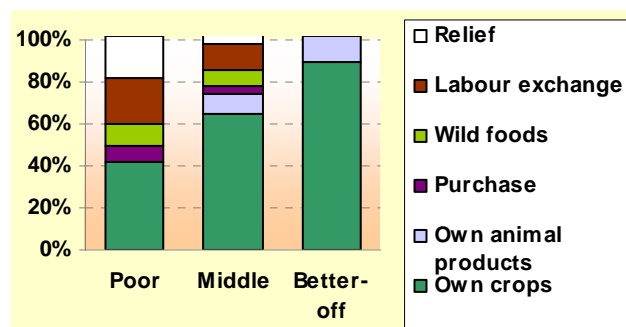
¹⁷ International Monetary Fund (IMF), 2003, p.35.

¹⁸ Mutangadura, G.B. (2000). Household Welfare Impacts of Mortality of adult Females in Zimbabwe: Implications for Policy and program Development.

Rural Sources of Food and Cash: Main Findings and Implications¹⁹

Sources of Food:

Middleveld: The middleveld zones - namely those zones located on Zimbabwe's central plateau - are dominated by cereal production (mainly maize but also millet and sorghum), as well as groundnuts. Farm produce also provides better-off households with most of their annual cash income. The predominance of own-crop production (the green on the bar chart at right²⁰) is striking, especially for middle and better-off households. Droughts are infrequent but when they do occur, these agricultural zones suffer huge crop losses, leading to significant gaps in household food supply. Hence, in the middleveld region, harvest outcomes are a key indicator of household food security.



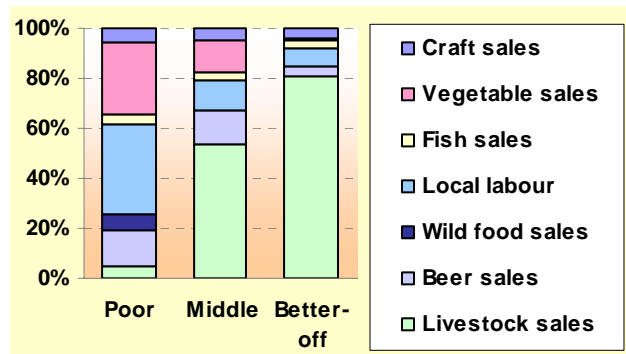
Lowveld: Lowland zones circle the central midland plateau, except in the east where the midlands rise to a rugged mountain range. Location in this lowland "ring" affects how households earn their primary income (see below). What they share in common is the risk associated with agriculture in an area where the climate is hot and dry, and rainfall erratic. Nonetheless, farmers try their luck year in, year out. For the poor, with little land, their harvest of maize and sorghum amounts to a relatively small source of annual food. For the better-off, cereal production is one important food source of three: namely own-crops, livestock and remittances. The exception is in the Zambezi Valley and Mudzi lowlands. These northern lowland zones are primarily agricultural and maize production is a chief food source for the poor and better-off. The implications for monitoring food security in the lowlands are two-fold: (i) harvest outcomes are an important indicator in the Zambezi and Mudzi lowlands, but only for better-off households in the lowveld; and (ii) for the poor, staple grain prices, especially relative to wages, are a better indicator of food access than harvest outcomes.

Highveld: In the highveld, own crop production provides families with most of their food during the year. Harvest outcomes are significant to food security. In highveld zones, a wide range of crops are grown—this diversity provides a safety net if one crop fails—although maize is the chief food crop.

Sources of Cash:

Middleveld: Farm produce is the main source of income for middle and better-off households in this agricultural region. Cash crops—mainly groundnuts, soybeans, and sorghum, as well as some cotton, paprika and sunflowers—find ready markets in local urban centers and Harare. Much of the region benefits from relative proximity to Harare. Droughts can dramatically reduce both food and cash crops; the main fallback is livestock sales as well as remittances. Fluctuating world prices and changes in marketing structures or buyers also affect farmer's returns. The present economic turmoil, with its associated disruption of transport and marketing systems, are hurting farmer incomes and causing shifts in crop selection. Poor households, by contrast, sow most of their land to food crops. For income, they rely primarily on casual work found locally or gold panning.

Lowveld: The chief ways households earn cash depend on where they live in the lowland region. In the south and in the Kariba Valley, for example, better-off agro-pastoralist households earn cash mainly from livestock sales (see graph at right.)²¹ Livestock prices relative to staple grain prices are critical to monitor in these areas. Just as notable throughout the southern and south-western region, is the contribution of migratory labor to household income. The southern zones share a border with South Africa and Botswana, and proximity to the border opens up more lucrative labor opportunities. Nonetheless, poor households tend to look for wage work closer to home due to labor and financial constraints. Game parks, commercial ranches and local mines all provide local



¹⁹ With few exceptions, the reference year for these profiles is 2003, that is data from 2003 is used to calculate the relative importance of various food and cash sources to a household's annual food needs.

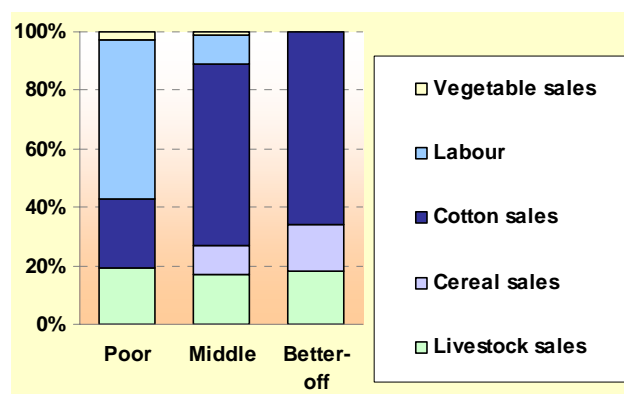
²⁰ Source of this graph: Zone 14 Livelihood Zone Profile.

²¹ Source of this graph: Zone 20 Livelihood Zone Profile.

work opportunities.

In other lowland zones, such as the Zambezi Valley, Mudzi, and Siabuwa/Nebiri, cotton is widely grown and this provides the main income source for better-off households (see graph at right.²²) The prevalence of cotton makes households' dependent on trends in price and demand on international cotton markets. On both graphs, what is also striking is the importance of local casual work to the poor.

Overall, the hot, dry Kariba Valley provides the most limited access to profitable and reliable income sources. Climate plays a role; so does the remoteness of the Valley from viable labor, tourism and produce markets. Given these factors, the Kariba Valley is notably the poorest area of Zimbabwe.



Highveld: Farm produce (namely cash crops) is the chief income source in the agricultural highveld. Market disruptions will have a significant impact on farmer income, as will international demand and prices for export crops (tobacco, sugar cane, tea, coffee and so on), although crop diversity provides some buffer to market fluctuations. As elsewhere, poor households cannot make ends meet from their own crop production (whether food or cash crops). Earning cash through local wage work—in this case mainly on local commercial plantations or in the lumber mills—is the main way poor families stay alive.

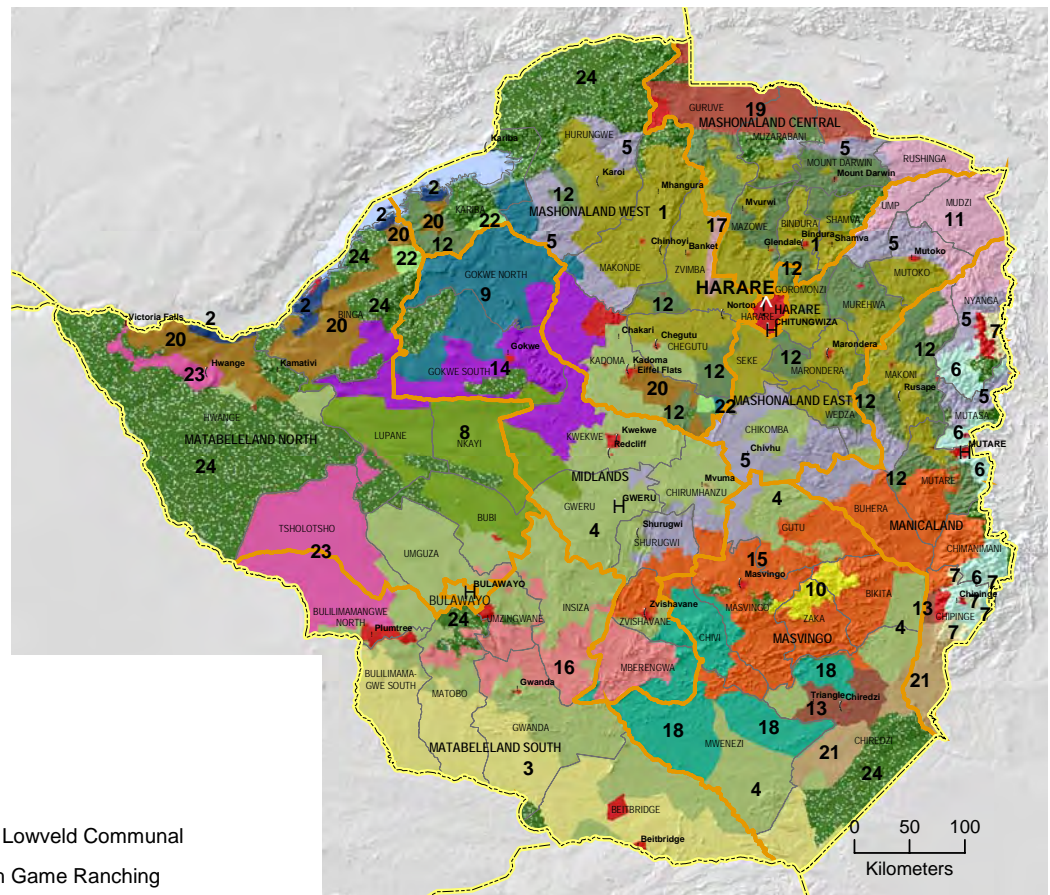
²² Source of this graph: Zone 20 Livelihood Zone Profile.

Rural Livelihood Zone Summaries



Livelihood Zone

- 0 Urban
- 1 A1 Prime
- 2 Agrofisheries
- 3 Beitbridge and South Western Lowveld Communal
- 4 Cattle and Cereal Farming with Game Ranching
- 5 Central and Northern Semi-Intensive Farming
- 6 Eastern Highlands Farm Workers
- 7 Eastern Highlands Prime Communal
- 8 Eastern Kalahari Sandveld Communal
- 9 Greater Northern Gokwe High Cotton Producing Communal
- 10 Great Zimbabwe and Bikita Semi-Intensive Communal
- 11 Greater Mudzi Communal
- 12 Highveld Prime Communal
- 13 Irrigated Commercial Sugar and Fruit Farming
- 14 Lusulu, Lupane and Southern Gokwe Mixed Agriculture
- 15 Masvingo Mutare Middleveld Communal
- 16 Matabeleland Middleveld and Highveld Communal
- 17 Mutorashanga Informal Mining
- 18 Mwenezi, Central Chivi and South Midlands Communal
- 19 Northern Zambezi Valley Communal
- 20 Poor Resource Kariba Valley and Kariangwe-Jambezi Communal
- 21 Save River Valley and Ndowoyo Communal
- 22 Siabuwa and Nebiri Low Cotton Communal
- 23 Western Kalahari Sandveld Communal
- 24 National Park



**Zone 1: A1 Prime**

Zone 1 covers prime agricultural land that used to be large scale commercial land but is now settled by A1 “new farmers”. The zone is expected to eventually improve food security by: (i) increasing production of food crops, and (ii) increasing income opportunities through the higher output of cash crops. However, agricultural inputs and service infrastructure to back the resettlement of A1 family farmers are lacking and currently restrict the full use of available land.

**Zone 2: Agrofishing**

This small zone includes households whose livelihoods depend essentially on the fishing trade in Lake Kariba, supplemented by agriculture and animal husbandry. The fishing villages are scattered along the lakeshore region within the Poor Resource Kariba Valley Zone.

**Zone 3: Beitbridge and South Western Lowveld Communal**

Livestock are the backbone of the economy in semi-arid Zone 3. However, poor households earn most of their income as farm laborers either in South Africa or on local commercial farms. Sorghum cropping, *mopane* worm sales and gold panning supplement wage earnings of the poor.

**Zone 4: Cattle and Cereal Farming with Game Ranching**

(Former name: Cattle and Game Ranching)

An area strongly impacted by the land redistribution program, the new owners of the sub-divided cattle ranches have introduced more crop production, particularly maize. Hence, income in Zone 4 comes from three main sources: cattle, crops and game.

**Zone 5: Central and Northern Semi-Intensive Farming**

Maize is the dominant crop in agricultural Zone 5, providing both food and income. Better-off households are reasonably self-sufficient in cereals but poor households depend equally on their own crops, daily wages and gold sales to make ends meet.

**Zone 6: Eastern Highlands Farm Workers**

(Former name: Eastern Highlands Commercial)

Due to high rainfall and good soils, the commercial plantations of mostly export crops (fruit, tea, coffee, sugar cane and flowers, as well as maize) do well in this rugged and thickly forested mountainous zone. Nonetheless, commercial farm workers in Zone 6 often have trouble making ends meet. Lumbering is the other main commercial activity, and both the sawmills and commercial farms are an important labor pull.

**Zone 7: Eastern Highlands Prime Communal**

Mountainous Zone 7 is characterized by intensively farmed, small plots of mixed food and cash crops. Maize is important but crop diversity is a key feature here (cereals, root crops, fruits, tea, coffee, tobacco and so on). Poor farmers find wage work locally at sawmills or on commercial plantations.

**Zone 8: Eastern Kalahari Sandveld Communal**

Income earned from local seasonal work - on farms, mines or in tourist areas - or from cross-border employment in South Africa and Botswana, is the economic mainstay of most households in Zone 8. Maize and sorghum farming is widespread but unreliable (the zone is semi-arid), and livestock sales a limited supplement for the poor.

**Zone 9: Greater Northern Gokwe High Cotton Producing Communal**

Zone 9 is characterized as a grain surplus area, where maize is the chief food crop and cotton the chief cash crop. The other pillar of agricultural income for better-off farmers is beef and dairy farming.

**Zone 10: Great Zimbabwe and Bikita Semi-Intensive Communal**

Intensive farming of maize and groundnuts on this relatively high potential land provides better-off farmers with a stable food and income source. Land in Zone 10 is densely populated and farm sizes thus small. The poor in particular depend on daily work found in the Bikita mines or in nearby farms and towns as well as working for better-off households within the zone.

**Zone 11: Greater Mudzi Communal**

The lowveld Zone 11 is characterized by extensive maize and cotton production. Goat and cattle sales provide an essential fall-back option in face of erratic rain and harvests. Poor farmers also turn to gold and tantalite panning to fill seasonal food and income gaps.

**Zone 12: Highveld Prime Communal**

Zone 12 boasts some of the country's prime agricultural land. A key feature is crop diversity. Maize is nonetheless the staple but a second season crop of wheat often adds to annual food stocks; and for the better-off, a variety of cash crops provide their main source of income.

**Zone 13: Irrigated Commercial Sugar and Fruit Farming**

The large-scale plantations in Zone 13 specialize in fruit, sugar cane and cotton. The commercial farm workers are primarily dependent on their wage earnings to secure their food needs.

**Zone 14: Lusulu, Lupane and Southern Gokwe Mixed Agriculture**

Zone 14 is a middleveld zone that supports both livestock production and crop production; maize grows well here and provides both food and income. Cotton is the chief cash crop for all; livestock sales bring in income mainly for the better-off. Daily wage work for poor farmers is still essential much of the year.

**Zone 15: Masvingo Mutare Middleveld Communal**

The typical middleveld pattern predominates in Zone 15: namely, a cropping calendar dominated by maize and millet with some lowland cash crops (groundnuts and cotton) added in. Cash income to buy food comes mainly from casual work wages for the poor or from livestock sales for better-off households owning sufficient goats and cattle.

**Zone 16: Matabeleland Middleveld and Highveld Communal**

Better-off farmers can make ends meet on their own farm output, which includes maize as the chief food crop; groundnuts and sorghum as cash/food crops; and livestock for sale in Zone 16. Poor farmers subsist partly on their own production of maize but, more importantly, on cash income earned from employment or gold panning.

**Zone 17: Mutorashanga Informal Mining Communities**

Zone 17 includes the mining communities on the Zvimba side of the Great Dyke. A mainly young population, the miners suffer high levels of job exploitation and food insecurity. Mainly employed in the mines, households also supplement wages with chrome picking and agricultural labor on nearby commercial farms.

**Zone 18: Mwenezi, Central Chivi and South Midlands Communal**

Lowland agriculture is typically risky; hence, the maize, sorghum, and groundnuts grown in Zone 18 provide a variable food and income base. Livestock are the other half of the lowland rural economy. For the poor, gold panning is widespread, as is the pursuit of casual wage work. Sales of crafts to tourist traveling along the Beitbridge-Masvingo highway may be important for a significant proportion of households in the zone.

**Zone 19: Northern Zambezi Valley Communal**

Bordering Mozambique, this northern valley region supports extensive maize and cotton production. Zone 19 is primarily agricultural although income from cash crops (cotton, groundnuts and sorghum) is supplemented by local, seasonal employment and some goat sales.

**Zone 20: Poor Resource Kariba Valley and Kariangwe-Jambezi Communal**

(Two former zones combined into one single zone.)

The Kariba Valley suffers from chronic problems of food insecurity. Cultivation—mainly millet and sorghum—is unreliable and wild foods are seasonal. Goat sales are the most common source of cash income but in this resource-poor area, local wage work, craft and beer sales must also be pursued. In Kariangwe – Jambezi, close proximity to Hwange provides work opportunities on commercial farms for the poor, as well as access to the tourist craft market.

**Zone 21: Save River Valley and Ndowoyo Communal**

(Former name: Chipinge and Save River Valley/Eastern Chiredzi Communal + Ndowoyo Communal + Mutema and Muskowa Communal)

Dry lowland Zone 21 is primarily agricultural - sorghum, millet and maize are the main crops - boasting good soil but limited by uncertain rainfall. Consequently, cash income earned through seasonal work, craft, goat, cotton sales and cross-border employment in Mozambique, South Africa and Botswana is fundamental to the food economy.

**Zone 22: Siabuwa and Nebiri Low Cotton Communal**

Located in the dry Kariba Valley, Zone 22 is farmed (maize and sorghum are the main food crops) but yields are low and variable. Cotton production spread into the Kariba Valley from Gokwe and provides some annual cash to farmers. Income from daily wage work and livestock sales, as well as seasonal wild fruits is the other staple features of this resource poor area.

**Zone 23: Western Kalahari Sandveld Communal**

Low-lying dryland Zone 23 has the advantage of proximity to labor markets in South Africa and Botswana. Hence, migratory labor stands out in importance although most poor farmers depend instead on local seasonal jobs. Millet, maize and groundnuts are grown as standard lowveld crops. *Mopane* worm harvesting offers some seasonal income, as do livestock sales.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 1: A1 Prime ²³

Main Conclusions and Implications

Resettled households in this zone in northern and central Zimbabwe depend on rain-fed food and cash crop cultivation. These small-scale farms were allocated to settlers under the Fast Track Land Resettlement Program that started in July 2000. The data collected here were based on interviews in a number of these new farms and focuses on the former farm workers and the settlers. These A1 farms also exist in lowveld of Zimbabwe but they are not included in this profile as their livelihoods are based more on livestock than on cultivation. There was striking variability in contexts found on the farms. This variability suggests caution when generalizing data across the zone. Note that the reference year used for these profiles was one of food insecurity. Low farm output reflected the effects of drought which in turn was exacerbated by problems linked to the land redistribution such as access to inputs and labor. These problems have extended the period of transition for resettled farmers. Once farmers are more established and the local economy stabilizes, this profile should be updated.

Zone Description

Geographically, this zone lies within the provinces of Mashonaland Central, East and West as well as in Manicaland. The land is some of the most fertile in Zimbabwe and is classified as Natural Regions IIa and IIb with a mean annual rainfall of 750-1,000 mm. As such the land is well-suited for rain-fed agriculture. The zone forms part of what was formerly the Mashonaland Highveld Commercial Farming Zone²⁴. One problem inherited by the resettled farmers is that transport and other services (health care, education, safe drinking water, sanitation and so on) are currently insufficient, as a result of both poor infrastructure and difficulties in getting fuel.

Zone 1 is a new zone, reflecting land distribution changes since 2000. At the time, the majority of large-scale (white-owned) commercial enterprises were acquired by the government, and then subdivided into smaller units, comprising both A2 and A1 farms. The former farm workers were substantially affected by these changes. Many of them lost their livelihoods and their home; some kept their jobs but without long term security, and others were resettled on the land. The difficulties of transition were exacerbated by a recent drought which interrupted the settling in process as did problems in accessing labor and other farming inputs. Therefore it is unclear when the new farms will become fully established.

This profile concentrates rather on the livelihoods of the new (A1) settler farmers and the former farm workers. Most are younger generation farmers, aged 22-40 years, who were resettled between mid-2000 and mid-2002 on 5 to 6 ha of arable land each plus access to communal grazing land. In peri-urban areas the designated plots were smaller. In general this zone is difficult to describe with great certainty because the situation is very fluid. One widespread observation is that currently the land is undercapitalized but this situation is likely to improve with time as the new farmers establish themselves. Due in part to lack of services in the resettled area, many farmers have not moved their families to the new farms. A few live and work on the new farms; some work in town during the week and employ someone else to cultivate the land; others work the new land but their children remain with relatives in nearby communal zones. In addition to the A1 farmers, the zone comprises many former farm workers who lost their jobs but who were not resettled and who have not yet found further employment. A few of these workers have obtained small plots of land to cultivate but many others are hoping to find casual work which pays better than the current employment opportunities offered by the new farmers who cannot afford to pay high wages.

The main constraints to successful livelihoods in this zone are the ability to invest in the land, draught power and access to labor, rather than soil and rainfall.

²³ Save the Children, Report on 4 Household Economy Assessments in Zimbabwe, for the SADC-VAC and Zimbabwe VAC, August 2002.

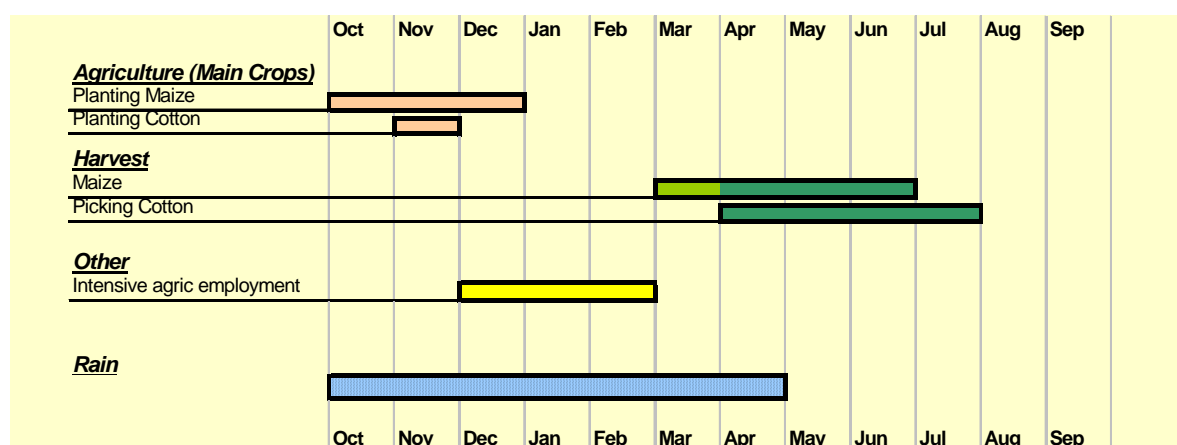
²⁴ The current Zone 4 (Cattle and Cereal Farming with Game Ranching Zone) is smaller now as it excludes the land divided off to form the new A1 farms. The commercial zone differs substantially from Zone 1 (A1 Prime Zone) as it produces mainly crops for export (tobacco, maize, cotton, flowers, fruit and vegetables) rather than crops for household consumption. In addition the households profiled in Zone 4 profile are farm workers and their dependents who live and work on the large-scale estates, rather than farmers working on their own land.

Markets

The major commodities produced for sale in this zone are maize, cotton, tobacco and livestock. Maize is purchased and sold through local traders, local farmers and Grain Marketing Board (GMB) outlets. Livestock are sold to local butcheries or to local traders and boarding schools. Much of the cash crop production is destined for export out of the country. Cotton is sold to Cotton Company of Zimbabwe (COTCO), Cargill and local traders while tobacco is sold at the major auction floors in Harare or to contractors such as British American Tobacco (BAT), TSL, Zimbabwe Leaf Tobacco (ZLT) and Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) Enterprises. Market access is often difficult for the new settlers due to the poor transport network that they inherited and the fact that many do not own their own vehicles.

Seasonal Calendar

Seasonal employment opportunities are available between November and August, linked to the agricultural period, although from December to February activities are at their most intensive as this is when the crops are weeded. During the dry season, between May and September, there are many off-farm income earning activities including construction around the homestead, repairing thatched roofs and cutting firewood to store for the rainy season. This is also the time when people engage in gold panning, although this is not widespread throughout the zone. A variety of wild foods are available in this zone, and these are mainly consumed between October and February, which is the period when household food stocks are generally low. The maize harvest starts in April, although maize is eaten green from the fields from March, and this provides a valuable food source to break the traditional 'hunger gap'.



Wealth Breakdown

This zone includes people doing a wide variety of activities at various levels. The poorest households are those without land; these are the former commercial farm workers. Some have unofficially been given small plots of land to cultivate, out of recognition that they need some form of livelihood. Among these, the very poorest are the households headed by an elderly person, a widow or a chronically sick adult (in other words these households do not have an able bodied adult). In addition these households usually have a number of orphans. Such households rely on sending teenage children to work and tend to do the less labor intensive income generating activities.

The settler households were each allocated about 6 ha of arable land (less in the peri-urban areas). However access to labor and agricultural inputs determines the proportion of this land that they are able to cultivate. The better off are generally those who have formal employment or a trade in an urban area, as they can raise the capital to employ others to work for them. They might have inherited an irrigation scheme and they usually have animal traction so they can cultivate the full 6 ha. Some better off households even borrow extra land to cultivate. Poor households with land are usually constrained by limited household labor capacity and they usually cannot afford the necessary inputs to make the maximum use of their land. In general, the poor cultivate 0.5 to 2 ha in total. Middle-income households generally cultivate around 2-3 ha. Few livestock are kept by households in this zone. The landless, poor and some middle-income households do not have any animals whereas a typical better off household owns fewer than 5 cows and up to a couple of goats. The percentage breakdown of the population into the various wealth groups is not represented here because until the situation settles, it is not possible to estimate the relative proportion of rich, middle and poor households.

Sources of Food

During the reference year, none of the wealth groups met their annual calorie requirement. This was due to a combination of factors which made households in this zone food insecure: (i) poor harvest in 2002, followed by (ii) limited availability of maize on the market, (iii) high food prices (both for maize and for substitutes such as bread, rice and potatoes) and (iv) limited income earning options that people could rely on. The most important source of food for landless households (both those with an able bodied adult and those without) was the market. These households either purchase maize from the parallel market, from local farmers or the GMB. Only middle and better off settler households can afford to pay the high price of substitutes when there is no maize on the market. Most food items purchased provide the cheapest possible calories; protein and micronutrients take second place in the monotonous diets of most households in this zone. Settled households with land obtain most of their food from their own harvests. They also have surplus for sale. However the harvest produced in the reference year was insufficient to meet the food needs of poor and middle-income households for the year. The remaining food 'gap' was largely covered by food purchases. Landless and poor settler households engage in a number of on and off-farm employment activities which are paid in either cash or food. When there is sufficient grain available workers are paid roughly a 20kg bucket for 3-4 days' work although the rate of pay varies widely. Some people go to work with other members of their household so that the work is completed more quickly and they earn the bucket of maize after only 1-2 days. The extremely poor (i.e., the unemployed landless) also receive gifts of food from relatives who are still employed on nearby operational commercial farms. Poor settler households also benefit from gifts from relatives as well as a small amount of food aid predominantly in the form of supplementary feeding for children less than 5 years. The resettlement and commercial farming areas were excluded from general food aid programs carried out in 2002-2004.

Sources of Cash

The pattern of income generation described here represents the particular conditions of this zone as it currently undergoes a transition period. As such, the patterns are likely to change as the settlers become established. Of note is that there is little difference in the total cash income earned by the unemployed landless and the poor settlers. However the poor settlers purchase far less maize thanks to their own crop production (and therefore they are more food secure overall). Landless households without an able bodied adult rely primarily on their labor capacity to earn money. They find either agricultural piece work such as clearing, harvesting and weeding or they carry out less labor intensive off farm work including collecting and selling thatch and fencing poles. A large proportion of the overall household income for landless households with an active adult was the retrenchment package they received from their former employers (although not all former workers received this). They also earn cash through selling mice, and fish, and doing construction work. While people are still settling into the area there is a relatively high demand for construction including erecting fences and building and thatching houses.

Settler households earn cash in a number of ways. For instance they sell some of the maize and vegetables they have cultivated. They also work in construction and find agricultural piece work (in the reference year this was paid not in cash but in cereals therefore this work is listed as a food not cash source). The poorer settlers also earn money through cattle herding, selling firewood, selling small hunted animals and/or receiving remittances from a relative working in town. Middle-income settlers earn around three times as much as the poor settlers due to their larger area cultivated, more diverse crop base (they grow tobacco and cotton as well as maize and vegetables), as well as due to cash earned selling milk or renting out their draught animals. In addition they might earn some money from chrome mining on the Great Dyke and from remittances.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- HIV/AIDS is a chronic problem and has an impact on the household's economy, limiting labor capacity and increasing expenditure on health care. Other factors affecting the harvest are hail storms and crop pests. Poor sanitation facilities in the zone mean that human diseases are spread easily. Frequent price increases are a hazard to all food purchasing households.

Periodic hazards:

- Cattle diseases such as foot and mouth affect animals in this zone, especially when they have had contact with animals from Masvingo or Matabeleland where such diseases are commonplace.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Reduction in household expenditure on non staple foods and non-food items
- Increased reliance on employment for food or cash

Distress strategies:

- Reduction in household expenditure on staple food
- No expenditure on non staple foods (i.e., compromised dietary diversity and quality)
- Children withdrawn from school
- No expenditure on health care
- People resort to poaching as a source of food and cash

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Increase in the price of maize, especially if wage rates do not increase in line with inflation.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profile

Zone 2: Agrofisheries

Main Conclusions and Implications

This small livelihood zone includes households whose livelihoods depend essentially on the fishing trade in Lake Kariba, supplemented by agriculture and animal husbandry. Households are food secure when their income earning activities generate enough cash to purchase food needs not met by agriculture.

Zone Description

Binga is one of the poorest and most rural districts in Zimbabwe. Livelihoods in this zone are characterized by fishing and related activities, supplemented by rainfed agriculture and animal husbandry. This small zone is situated on the banks of Lake Kariba within Binga and Kariba districts. It includes some of the households within the Manjolo, Siabuwa, Hwange and Omayi communal lands plus all households within Gatshe Gatshe communal lands. The households described here are geographically interspersed with non-fishing households who fall within Zone 20. Most of the land in this zone is classified as Natural Region V and the rainfall averages as below 650 mm per year. As such, agriculture alone is not sufficient to sustain livelihoods, but is supplemented by fishing activities. Households in this zone are distinctly split into two for their activities: the men spend most of the year in fishing camps along the lakes while the women and children live further inland where they practice some limited agriculture and animal husbandry. Sometimes the men might cultivate a small plot of land near the fishing camp. There is an exchange between the two parts of the household in that the men send money to their wives to purchase food and other necessities and the women send cereals to their husbands. The typical harvest that the women can obtain lasts no more than half of the year therefore in addition to the remittances from their husbands, the women also practice market gardening, collect wild foods and make handicrafts including crocheted items to sell to the tourists who come to Lake Kariba. The majority of the households within this zone are Tonga. The dual household system is a major contributing factor to the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Binga.

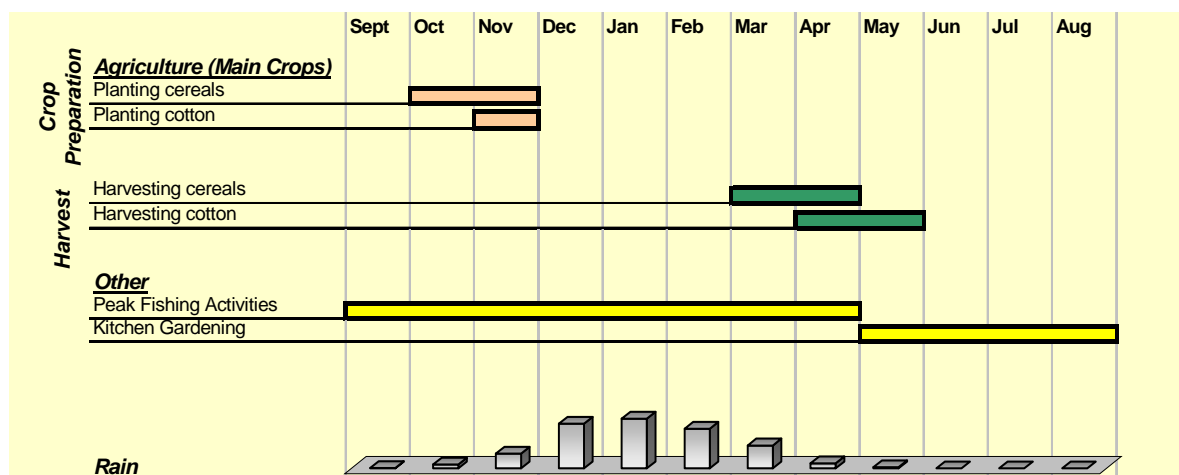
Markets

Employment, in particular local employment in fishing activities, is key to the survival of these households. In addition to the local independent fishing businesses there are a number of kapenta rigs based on the lake, and which absorb a fairly high workforce. Some households also benefit from income derived from working in other parts of Zimbabwe, in particular Bulawayo, Hwange, Harare, Kariba and Karoi.

Fish is sold to private traders, destined for markets in Harare, Bulawayo and other urban centers. There is also a limited fish trade locally in Binga and Mujere to non-fishing households. Livestock are sold to private traders from Gokwe and Hwange, who act as middle men, selling on to the Cold Storage Commission. Some animals are also sold to passengers on the buses along the Siabuwa-Binga road. Cotton is sold to the Cotton Marketing Board in Gokwe. Binga town and Simatele are the main locations for the purchase of cereals to supplement that which is grown.

Seasonal Calendar

The main cereals grown are millet, sorghum and maize. Although the former two crops are more suited to this dry zone, maize is the cereal that people prefer because of its flavor and relative ease of preparation. Another key advantage is that it can be eaten green before the harvest is ready, thereby acting as a valuable food source which ends the hunger gap, when food stocks are traditionally low. The peak fishing activities coincide with the main agricultural period therefore the women are obliged to manage their crops alone, without assistance from their men who are away on the fishing camps at this time. Wild foods including fruits and leaves are available throughout the year. If the rainfall is poor, this limits the flow of nutrients into the lake and hence reduces the potential fish catch. Fishing is less successful during the cold season because the fish go deeper and are less active, and therefore harder to catch.



Wealth Breakdown

Wealth in this zone is directly linked to the income earned through fishing activities. Better off and some middle households own fishing nets and the wealthier households are the ones that own boats. Income for such households comes from the sale of fish. The poor on the other hand have very few productive assets so their main income comes from working for the better off. Wealthier households invest in livestock and a typical better off household may own over 20 cattle and 50-60 sheep and goats. A typical poor household on the other hand has a few chickens and perhaps a goat. Middle households fall somewhere in between these two extremes. Agricultural activities for better off households benefit from ownership of ploughs and animal traction, while the poor cultivate by hand.

Sources of Food

There is a striking difference in the relative importance of the various sources from which households in this zone obtain their food. The main food sources are household crop production, purchase and wild foods. While the most important source of food for better off households is from their own cereal harvests, the poor rely heavily on the market, purchasing food with income earned through employment. While fish are naturally regularly consumed by such households the caloric contribution to overall annual household needs is relatively small compared with other food sources. Better off households also consume milk and meat from their own animals but poorer households have insufficient animals to obtain food in this way.

Sources of Cash

Households within this zone rely on various means to earn cash, and the relative proportions of these reflect their ownership of productive assets. The better off households who own fishing nets and boats earn over a quarter of their annual income from the sale of fish which they have usually employed others to catch for them. Such households also tend to have someone working elsewhere who remits money from time to time, and they may invest in small commercial businesses such as small grocery shops. With their larger animal holdings, the sale of livestock, in particular goats, is more important for better off than for poorer households. Poorer households rely on their labor to earn money when the men work on the fishing boats and the kapenta rigs. Another key income generating source for such households is the brewing of sorghum beer for sale within the village, making and selling handicrafts to tourists at the lake or collecting thatch and wild foods for sale.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- Strong winds can cause fishing boats to capsize and these are a regular threat to the fishermen.
- HIV/AIDS is another threat in this area, which affects both fishing and farming activities.
- Particularly for the poor, food purchase exposes them to the price increases arising from rampant inflation.

Periodic hazards:

- Every few years floods affect the zone, inundating the fields and making fishing more hazardous.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increase in the collection and sale of wild foods.
- Increased reliance on gifts to poorer households from their better off neighbors

Distress strategies:

- Information unavailable.

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Higher supply of fish on the market than the urban demand will lead to a decrease in prices that the fishermen can command for their catch, with the risk that they are unable to recoup the cost of fishing. This is especially serious when this coincides with periods when the price of staple cereals is high.
- Increase in the number of people collecting wild foods.
- Increase in the number of people looking for local labor, which usually results in a drop in the wage rate. This is more serious when it occurs at the same time as high prices for staple cereals.
- Increase in the sale of animals, and the terms of trade for goats compared with staple cereals.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 3: Beitbridge and South Western Lowveld Communal

Main Conclusions and Implications

This is an agropastoral zone although employment is also a key source of food and cash income. The majority of households own some animals and these are a key safety net - livestock can be sold to buy staple cereals if the need arises. Many rural households also have relatives who work in town and who remit money to their village. Proximity to southern commercial estates and to job markets along the border with South Africa and Botswana opens up significant employment opportunities.

Zone Description

This lowveld zone forms a long thin strip along the south of the country, on the border with South Africa and Botswana. These communal lands are classified as Natural Region V. Annual rainfall is very low, averaging less than 475 mm. The zone includes the districts of Beitbridge, Chiredzi, southern and central Gwanda, southern Matobo, and southern Bulimamangwe. Important rivers pass through this zone, in particular the Limpopo, Tuli, Umzingwane and Shashi. These rivers, along with the disused mines, provide opportunities for gold panning. Livelihoods are characterized as primarily agropastoral. Food and cash income from animal husbandry are supplemented by income from seasonal work in the nearby commercial citrus fruit farms in Beitbridge or migratory work in South Africa and Botswana. Animal holdings are generally larger in this zone compared with other parts of the country, especially around Beitbridge because the land here is more suited to grazing. The zone benefits from the tarred roads between urban centers, facilitating transport and trade along the main routes.

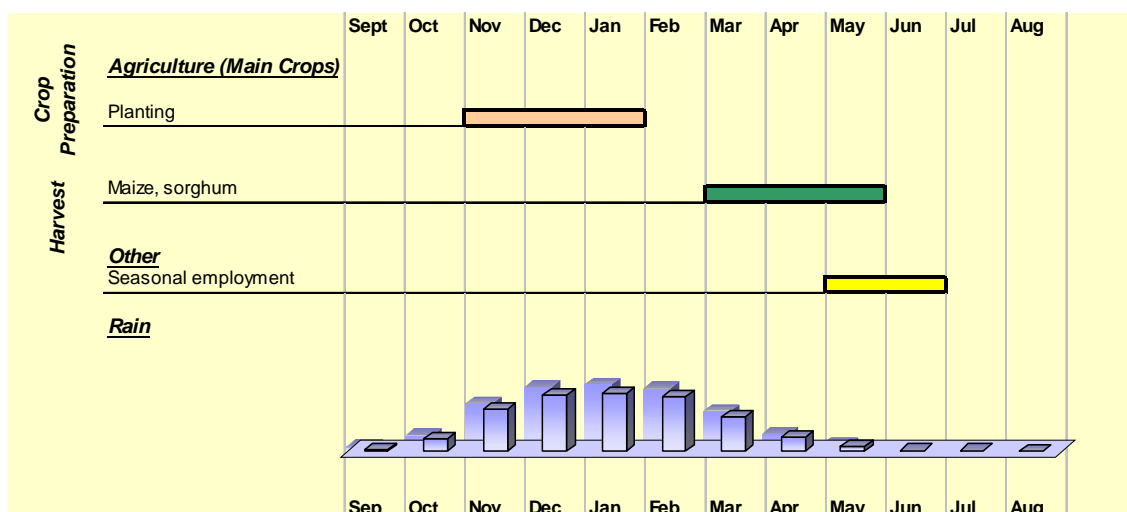
Markets

Cattle are mainly sold to local traders who come to the villages and purchase animals for re-sale to butcheries or abattoirs in towns or the Cold Storage Commission in Bulawayo and Masvingo. Vegetables and fruits are sold to travelers along the tarmac roads or in urban centers. Cereals are sold to the Grain Marketing Board (GMB), and purchased from the GMB, local shops or farmers in Masvingo and Mashonaland who have a surplus. There is a relatively lively cross border exchange of goods and currency. Cowpeas are sold to traders from Botswana and South Africa.

Local jobs can be found either in the village doing piecemeal work on fields of better off neighbors, on commercial fruit farms in Beitbridge or across the border in South Africa. More lucrative job opportunities are found across the border in South Africa or Botswana or in major urban centers within Zimbabwe such as Bulawayo, Beitbridge, Masvingo, Gwanda and Harare. Such work opportunities are chiefly exploited by better off households.

Seasonal Calendar

The main cereals grown in this zone are sorghum, millet and maize. Other important crops include groundnuts, sweet reeds (*ipwa*), cowpeas, melons and beans. Roughly half of the cultivated land area is with maize, even though this crop does not do as well as the other cereals in such dry conditions. However maize typifies the Zimbabwean diet and is preferred for its taste and relative ease of preparation compared with sorghum and millet. It can also be eaten fresh before the harvest is ready thereby providing an important source of food at a time when stocks are usually low.



Wealth Breakdown

Wealth in this zone depends on the number of animals owned, remittances from household members and the capacity to grow cash crops such as groundnuts, beans, sweet reed, melons and vegetables. Better off households tend to own 100 or more goats and sheep, and around 50 cattle. Their harvests are generally higher due to the benefit of animal traction. Even poorer households own some small ruminants along with some chickens and possibly a donkey. Many households seek employment in South Africa or in Botswana. Those who find lucrative employment opportunities there can improve the economic situation of their household to such an extent that they are relatively better off than others in the zone. By contrast, those households doing local jobs on neighboring commercial farms or in nearby towns tend to be poorer.

Sources of Food

Given the erratic rainfall, household crop production alone is unable to meet the annual food needs of any wealth group. Consequently the purchase of food is very important in this zone. People who live near to the rivers and seasonal streams are able to supplement their diet with fishing, along with wild foods such as *mopane* worms, fruits and wild game. Even in normal years, poorer households tend to rely on borrowing food from better off households or on occasional gifts or food in the form of relief through public works programs. This source of food increases during difficult years, but food aid distributions depend on funding availability, and therefore cannot always be relied upon.

Sources of Cash

Households in this zone have diversified income sources. Proximity to commercial estates and to the border with South Africa and Botswana provide important employment opportunities. Gold panning (for poorer households) and sales of livestock (especially for better off households) are important income earners. Cash income is also earned by the poor through the sale of *mopane* worms, handicrafts and through public works programs.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- Rainfall is unreliable in this zone and activities such as cropping and livestock rearing are often negatively affected by the low and erratic rainfall.
- Given the rate of annual inflation in Zimbabwe, food purchase is a risky strategy to depend on for access to food. Sudden and sharp price increases are expected and common.

Periodic hazards:

- Livestock diseases occur around four to seven years out of ten.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increase in sale of livestock
- Increase in gold panning activities
- Increased consumption of wild foods
- Income redistribution: this includes gifts of cash or food by better off households to their poorer neighbors

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Poor terms of trade for cattle and goats relative to staple cereal prices (in particular maize).
- Increase in the number of people crossing the border to look for work in South Africa or Botswana.
- Rates for seasonal labor compared with staple cereal prices (in particular maize).
- Increase in the number of people who look for seasonal work, which could lead to a reduction in the labor wage rate.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 4: Cattle and Cereal Farming with Game Ranching

Main Conclusions and Implications

This zone was greatly affected by the Fast Track Land Reform Program. Ranches were sub-divided and there was wide-scale change of ownership. This has increased the number of farms, especially of two types: the A1 'self-contained' farms and the A2 small-scale commercial farms. The new farm owners have introduced more cereal production on land that was previously reserved for mainly game and cattle ranching. The new farmers are still settling and patterns may change again once people become more established. A second change is the loss of work for the former commercial ranch workers, of whom there were relatively few as compared to the agricultural commercial farming sector. Some of these workers have retained their jobs, while the others have resettled elsewhere. This profile focuses on the A1 farms and the farm workers on the A2 and former commercial ranches.

Zone Description

This large livelihood zone covers a vast area across southern and central Zimbabwe. It includes areas classified as National Regions III, IV and V. The population includes many new farm owners (A2 commercial, A1 villagized and A1 self contained). These farmers combine cereal agriculture with livestock ownership and game ranching on land that was formerly used for cattle and game ranching. The soil is more suitable for cattle and game than for agriculture, and therefore crop productivity is relatively low. Associated with these commercial farms are the farm worker communities. Many of those workers who were displaced have resettled elsewhere, often within the zone. Unlike the agricultural prime commercial zone, farms in this zone did not generally employ many workers. This is because the labor input for cattle and game rearing is less than that required for crop production. Average annual rainfall varies across the zone. In the northeast (Natural Region III), rainfall averages a relatively high 650-800 mm; the south and central areas (Natural Regions IV and V) are drier, with rainfall 450 mm or less per year.

Markets

Ranch owners sell their cattle at auctions organized by the Rural Development Council (RDC) or to private butcheries and abattoirs in Bulawayo, Masvingo, Harare and Beitbridge. The remaining game ranches are regulated by hunting quotas and depend on the tourist market. Vegetables grown in the market gardens are mainly sold locally and in nearby urban centers. Formerly, employment opportunities were available on the commercial ranches in this area. It is not clear to what extent the newly resettled farmers will be able to employ other people to work for them.

Seasonal Calendar

The main crops grown are cereals including maize, millet and sorghum, with groundnuts, cowpeas, sweet potatoes and melons. There is also some market gardening.

Wealth Breakdown

Land tenure changed under the fast track land reform program. The main change involved the transfer of ownership as well as the sub-division of the large-scale commercial ranches into smaller plots. New farm sizes differ according to the type of settlement. A1 (self contained) farmers own 100-250 ha and A1 (villagized) farmers own 3-5 hectares of arable land. With these shifts in farm ownership, many farm workers had their livelihoods disrupted. The proportion affected varies widely by district. For all workers, their status is determined by their wage earnings, job stability and savings (if they have retained their jobs) or their land holdings and productivity (if they have been resettled).

Sources of Food

The new A1 farm owners have maintained a focus on cattle and game ranching. However they have also introduced crop (rather than fodder) production, particularly maize, sorghum and millet. Farm workers do not necessarily have plots of land to cultivate and they rely mainly on purchasing food. People collect wild foods including *mopane* worms, and go hunting; both of these activities improve the quality of the diet.

Sources of Cash

For farm owners, income comes from three main sources: cattle, surplus cereals and game (i.e., trophy hunting). Some farmers have also diversified into cash crop production including cotton and vegetables although these are still at a relatively small scale. By contrast farm workers rely on employment as their main source of income. Other means of earning cash income in this zone include gold panning along the Tuli and Mzingwani rivers, selling *mopane* worms, poaching, working in the mines and working in urban centers such as Masvingo and Bulawayo.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- Theft of cattle and poaching of game occur regularly on the commercial ranches which are very large and which are difficult to protect.
- The increase in cultivation of cereals in this arid area will mean that the erratic rainfall will become a problem.
- Bush fires are also relatively common.
- HIV/AIDS is a problem affecting this zone which has dire consequences for household productivity

Periodic hazards:

- Around 4 to 7 years out of 10, livestock are affected by disease epidemics.
- Over a ten year period, 1-3 years will be affected by drought.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increased sales of livestock
- Increased reliance on wild foods

Distress strategies:

- Increase in poaching
- Sales of livestock at unsustainable rates (for example so that it will be difficult or impossible to reconstitute the herd in the future without assistance)

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Trends in birth and mortality of cattle, linked to rainfall and disease epidemics and having an impact on prices.
- Wage rates for labor in relation to prices of staple grain (in particular maize).
- Increase in number of people who turn to gold panning.
- Increase in the number of people who look for seasonal and other work opportunities.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 5: Central and Northern Semi-Intensive Farming

Main Conclusions and Implications

Rain-fed agriculture – mainly of cereals – characterizes this zone. Maize is the dominant crop, providing both food and cash income. Better off households are reasonably self-sufficient in cereals but poorer households depend equally on their own crops, daily wages and gold panning to make ends meet. This zone was affected by the fast-track land reform program. In particular, the borders of the zone have extended to include new A1 farms. Once the situation has settled and the new farmers have become established the information in this profile should be updated.

Zone Description

This zone includes communal lands widely scattered in pockets across the central and northern part of the country. It covers three provinces; Mashonaland, Midlands and Manicaland – as well as numerous districts: Shurugwi, Chirumanzu, Serima, Denhere, northern Gutu, Save, Nharira, Southern Wedza, Southern Chiuku, Southern Mutoko, Central Uzumba, Kadya, Southern Muzarabani, Southern Gutsa, Bakasa, Northern Kachuta, North-Eastern Mukwichi, Western Hurungwe, Nyaodzi, Eastern Rengwe, Eastern Piriwi, Eastern Umfoli and Magondi. The boundaries of the zone extended with the inclusion of new A1 farms (previously these were part of large-scale commercial farms). Although these new farms have larger landholdings than their communal neighbors, the farmers generally have few assets therefore their production levels are still fairly low.

Farming in this middleveld zone is characterized first and foremost by rain-fed maize production. Groundnuts, tobacco (Virginia and burley), cotton and soya beans are the main cash crops. The zone is classified as Natural Regions II and III with an annual average rainfall of 650-800 mm. In normal years these conditions produce a moderate grain surplus. Overall it is considered a relatively prosperous zone.

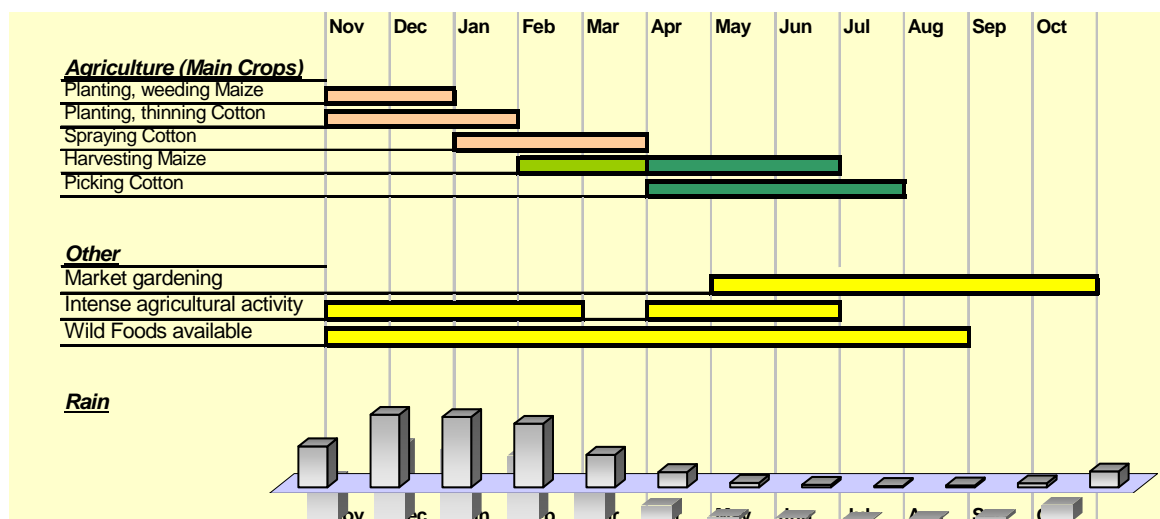
Cereal farming is supported by animal husbandry and other income generating activities. Oxen and donkeys provide traction for plough agriculture and some livestock are kept in reserve for cash sales when needed (even most poor households own some goats).

Markets

The main commodity markets have outlets in the main towns at district level. Cereals are bought and sold via the Grain Marketing Board; cotton is sold to the Cotton Company of Zimbabwe (COTCO), FSI and Cargil and livestock are sold to the Cold Storage Commission (CSC) and to private buyers. Tobacco is sold on the main auction floors. In most cases surplus cereal and cash crops are sold to private buyers and agents at local level who then sell them on to the parastatals. Handicrafts are sold in larger towns while gold is sold to buyers who come in to the zone from around the country. The labor market is mainly local or in urban areas throughout Zimbabwe.

Seasonal Calendar

The main food crops grown are maize, sorghum, groundnuts, millet and roundnuts. In February and March maize is eaten green from the fields and this acts as a valuable source of food to break the traditional hunger gap when household food stocks are low, when food prices are high and it is difficult for households to secure their food needs. Agricultural activities occur during most of the year. These activities are very intense at the start of the rainy season when both cotton and maize are planted. In the following months the maize is weeded and cotton is thinned out. Between January and March apart from spraying the cotton there are few agricultural activities. They become more intense again after the rainy season has ended: at this time the maize is harvested and the cotton is picked. Dry season activities (between June and August) include construction, repairing thatched roofs, fencing gardens and collecting firewood to store for use during the rainy season.



Wealth Breakdown

Wealth is strongly linked to the land area cultivated. In turn this is linked to access to assets including a plough and oxen (or donkey), land, labor, seeds and fertilizer. Better off households are resource rich which translates into better harvests and more food and cash income. They can afford to pay people to work for them in their fields during period of intense agricultural activity. By contrast, resource poor households own smaller plots of land and they rely solely on household labor (rather than hired labor) to cultivate their fields.

Sources of Food

Own crop production is a very important source of food for all households in this zone. In a normal year the harvest of better off households covers most of their annual needs. By contrast, poor households produce enough to cover just under half of their annual food needs. When harvest stocks run out they rely on the market for the rest. Own livestock products namely meat and milk, only feature in the diets of better off households with larger livestock holdings. Limited amounts of wild food are consumed by people in poorer households, mainly as snacks.

Sources of Cash

There are striking differences in the importance of the various income sources, linked to socio economic status. A very important source of income for richer households is from the sale of cash crops such as soya beans, cotton, tobacco and some paprika as well as the sale of maize. Poorer households, who devote their small landholdings mainly to food crops, rely heavily on the casual labor for their cash income. They work on nearby commercial farms and do small jobs in towns (for example as domestics or on construction sites). Gold panning and remittances from relatives in town are additional income sources available to some households. When their cattle are in calf, middle-income and better off households often have a surplus of milk which they sell.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- HIV/AIDS is a serious problem in this zone
- Crop pests and crop diseases.
- Tick infestations of livestock are an annual hazard, after the start of the rains when there is a lot of long grass and tick-borne diseases regularly attack cattle in this zone.

Periodic hazards:

- The zone is affected by drought roughly every 1-3 years out of ten.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increase in sales of livestock
- Increase in paid daily labor activities
- Increased reliance on the market to purchase food

Distress strategies:

- Young girls are married off early, to obtain the bride price and reduce the number of mouths to feed
- Children withdrawn from school
- Reduction in the number of meals and the quantity of food eaten

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Poor yields of maize or reduced land area cultivated suggest that there is a problem and this could lead to increases in the prices of maize which will primarily affect poorer households who rely on the markets to purchase a large proportion of their food needs. This could be due to increased cost of inputs.
- International markets determine the prices of cotton and tobacco and if these are too low then producers will be unable to cover their production costs.
- An increase in the number of people looking for local work opportunities could lead to a decrease in the wage rate. This will be particularly serious if it coincides with an increase in the cost of staple foods.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 6: Eastern Highlands Farm Workers

Main Conclusions and Implications

Livelihoods in this Eastern Highlands commercial zone centre on permanent employment on large-scale commercial farms or in the sawmills and lumber yards. Additional sources of food or income depend largely on the workers' place of work. On some plantations, farm workers have access to garden plots or small fields. This zone underwent some significant changes associated with the fast track resettlement program. However, many of the former commercial farm workers retained their jobs. Even with jobs, farm workers presently face enormous difficulties making ends meet as wages cannot keep pace with rampant inflation and the rapid rise in the market prices.

Zone Description

This zone includes the households of permanent workers on the commercial farms and sawmills in the Eastern Highlands. The eastern Highlands are a mountainous range running 250 km along the Zimbabwe-Mozambique border. There are many indigenous forests here and soils are reasonably fertile. This zone includes the districts of Nyanga, Wedza, Makoni, Mutasa, Chimanimani and Chipinge. In addition, rainfall is more reliable than in other parts of the country. The zone usually receives an average rainfall of 650-1000 mm per year. Depending on the altitude, the land classification shifts among Natural Regions I, IIa, IIb and III. The area was included in the fast track land reallocation program and some commercial farm workers lost their jobs as commercial farms were acquired by the GoZ and then sub-divided and re-allocated to new owners. However this zone was less affected than other commercial areas and most of the commercial farm workers have retained their jobs. The estates where they work continue to grow a diverse range of cash crops for export, namely oranges, bananas, tea, coffee and flowers. Many of these crops require irrigation systems and other mechanized infrastructure. It is unclear to what extent the new farm owners can maintain the infrastructure. In future there may be shifts towards crops which require less mechanization. People also work on the forestry estates with plantations of wattle, pine and eucalyptus.

In this commercial zone, workers earn their livelihood from employment. However many households need to supplement the principal wage and how they do so varies from farm to farm. Some farm owners allocate plots of land for the workers to cultivate some maize or garden vegetables for themselves. Hence supplementary earnings depend on the amount of land given and any assistance provided with inputs (draught power, etc.) for tilling this land. There are some farms where the workers do not have access to any land therefore they depend totally on their income from employment. Most of the workers in this area are former migrants originally from Malawi and Mozambique. These migrants have now settled in Zimbabwe, and their children - second generation immigrants - form much of the current commercial farm worker population.

Markets

Most of the produce from the commercial farms in this zone is destined for export. Farm workers purchase nearly all of their cereals, usually from the local store which is often run by the commercial farm owner. Chickens and vegetables are traded locally to fellow workers and there is also some trade in non-food items from off the farm. Handicrafts are sold in nearby tourist areas. There is also some cross border trade in rice, soap and clothing from Mozambique in exchange for sugar and maize from Zimbabwe.

Seasonal Calendar

Farm workers with access to small plots of land engage in vegetable gardening all year round, chiefly growing tomatoes, onions, cabbage and rape. Maize is planted in November/December, ready for harvesting by April. Given that livelihoods depend on employment on the commercial farms or sawmills, this protects households to a certain extent from seasonal fluctuations in access to food. Wild foods are available between October and March.

Wealth Breakdown

Wealth among the worker households in this zone depends on the skill category and wage level of the permanent worker employed on the farm or sawmill. The better off skilled workers are foremen, mechanics, clerks and workshop workers. The poorer employees are semi-skilled or unskilled. Middle households might have the income from a permanent worker and from someone who does seasonal work.

Sources of Food

The main, and in some cases the only, source of food for these worker households is the market. A few who have access to land grow a small proportion of their food (mainly maize and some vegetables). There are a few wild foods available in this zone, but they do not contribute much in terms of calories.

Sources of Cash

The most important source of income, and that which defines this economy, is employment on the commercial farms or sawmills. A small amount of extra money is raised through selling chickens or vegetables. Some of the better off households also trade goods brought in from off the farm. Around Chimanimani, Chipinge, Mutasa and Nyanga there are opportunities for gold panning. The increasing practice of this activity is leading to environmental degradation as the soil is easily eroded.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- HIV/AIDS is a chronic hazard among the population of farm workers, which has dire consequences on their income earning capacity.
- The high dependency on the market for food exposes this worker population to the effects of the current rampant inflation.

Response Strategies

- During a bad year, the commercial farm workers are better off than people in the neighboring communal lands. Therefore they often host children of their relatives who are unable to make ends meet during a particularly bad year. While seasonal workers are usually the first to be laid off in a bad year, permanent workers are generally kept on. At such times, the seasonal workers turn to gold panning to earn some cash, which has a resulting detrimental impact on the environment.

Crisis Warning Indicators

- If maize meal prices increase beyond the reach of the daily wage then this will cause severe hardship to the farm worker households since they have very few other activities to fall back on.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 7: Eastern Highlands Prime Communal

Main Conclusions and Implications

The climate and land are a good combination for successful agriculture in this zone although high population density and small land holdings limit how much one household can produce. Successful livelihoods in this zone are also dictated to some extent by international commodity prices. However there are also a number of other employment opportunities that people fall back on as needed, including working in the commercial agriculture and forestry sector. This zone's boundaries and wealth group definitions changed recently to include farmers resettled on A1 model farms and therefore the profile will need to be updated as they become integrated into the economy of the zone.

Zone Description

The land in this part of Zimbabwe is some of the most productive communal land in the country. Livelihoods in this zone are characterized by intensive rain fed agriculture of cereal and cash crops. Plots are small so food and income produced on the farm must be supplemented by income earned from employment and animal husbandry. This mountainous zone is situated in the east of the country. It includes scattered pockets of communal lands on or near the border with Mozambique. These fall within the administrative districts of Chipinge, Chimanimani, Mutare, Mutasa, Makoni, Nyanga. Throughout the zone conditions are excellent for agriculture although there is some variation in soils and climate as one moves from east (classified as Natural Region I) to west (Regions IIa, IIb and III) in the zone. At these high altitudes temperatures are relatively low. Annual average rainfall ranges from 650 to 1400 mm. Maize is a staple crop but crop diversity is characteristic of this zone. For example a variety of cash crops are grown on the rugged terrain, including bananas, avocados, sugar cane, tobacco, tea and coffee. For annual cash crops, farmers are price responsive, prioritizing land area cultivated according to the prevailing world market prices. In recent years the combination of fungal diseases attacking seeds and other crop diseases has led to a reduction in the amount of tobacco, cotton and sunflowers within the zone.

Households also engage in other activities including brewing beer, selling handicrafts, molding bricks and collecting firewood, thatch grass and manure for sale. This part of the country is also known for its forested areas which are crossed by numerous streams and small rivers and the beautiful scenery makes this a popular tourist destination. The zone boundaries extended recently to include some newly resettled farmers under the land reallocation scheme. They fall under the category of A1 family farms (self contained small scale commercial farms), some of whom inherited irrigation facilities.

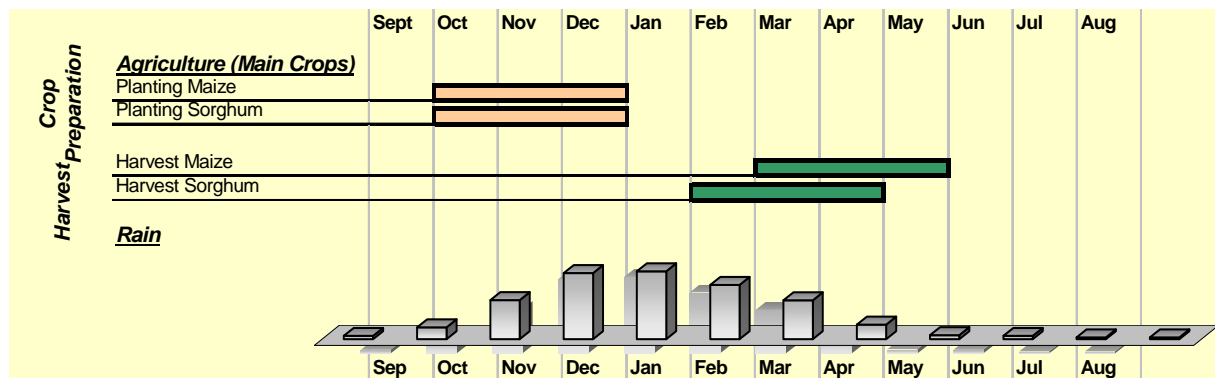
Markets

The fruits and vegetables produced in this zone are mainly marketed through private traders who resell the produce in the busy towns of Mutare and Nyanga. Some farmers collaborate to share transport costs and take the produce to Mutare themselves. Proximity to Mozambique also enables a lively cross border trade in sugar, fruit and eggs from Zimbabwe and rice, soap and clothing from Mozambique. Livestock are sold to local butcheries at nearby growth points, to the Cold Storage Commission in Mutare or across the border in Mozambique. Cereals are bought and sold through the Grain Marketing Board outlets in Mutare, Nyanga and Rusape or through private traders.

People from this zone find employment opportunities on the local commercial fruit farms, commercial sawmills, large farms or in urban areas in particular Mutare and Harare.

Seasonal Calendar

The main cash crops grown are peaches, oranges, bananas, avocados, coffee, sunflowers, vegetables, groundnuts, tobacco and cotton. Given the small farm sizes, food crops usually only cover around half of the annual food needs, so households have to rely on market purchase for the remaining months. In addition to maize, other food crops grown include potatoes, yams, and beans.



Wealth Breakdown

Wealth is linked to the area of land cultivated and the type of crops grown. For example poor households typically cultivate around a hectare of land by hand, concentrating on food crops. Middle-income households in contrast cultivate around 2 hectares of mixed food and cash crops, while better off households cultivate proportionally more cash than food crops. Better off households have access to sufficient inputs - animal traction, irrigation, fertilizer, hired labor and so on - for successful agriculture. Poor households not only lack essential inputs but they also juggle their time between cultivating their own land and finding work to pay for their immediate needs. Animal husbandry is limited by the lack of grazing land (this zone is densely populated). Nonetheless, better off households typically own 8 or 9 cattle, 30-40 goats and sheep and maybe some pigs. The poor own far fewer animals; a few chickens and maybe a couple of goats. In a normal year, middle-income and better off households can afford to wait before selling off surplus harvest thereby benefiting from higher prices than the poor, who need the money as soon as possible and who therefore are obliged to sell just after the harvest when prices are at their lowest. In this zone, the poor generally have larger households than the better off. More children mean more potential labor but when they are young it also means more dependents.

Sources of Food

Own crops are the major source of food for middle and better off wealth groups supplemented by milk and meat from their own herds. Despite the region's agricultural potential, the poor rely principally on the market to purchase food, as their fields are too small to provide sufficient food. Wild foods and occasional gifts of food from their neighbors help make up the difference when food stocks (bought or grown) run low. Market purchases are also a fairly significant source of food for the middle-income farmer which in part reflects the importance of cash crops in the area.

Sources of Cash

The local economy in this zone depends on cash crop sales, chiefly for middle-income and better off households. The wealthier households typically earn annual income from a mix of cash crop sales and private trade. By contrast, middle-income households combine cash crop sales with employment and/or remittances. The picture for the poor is different again, and more heavily dependent on the labor market. They generally earn most of their annual income from local employment combined with sales of thatch grass and firewood, gold panning and public works programs. The commercial plantations, sawmills and lumber yards provide important job opportunities for those seeking to pick up casual work during the year: making bricks, doing casual work at nearby sawmills and working in the fields of better off neighbors or on nearby commercial farms.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- The international markets dictate prices that farmers obtain for their cash crops and their unreliability is an annual concern.
- Over reliance on the market for food exposes the middle income families to frequent price rises arising from the inflationary environment.
- HIV/AIDS is a chronic problem, affecting agricultural and employment related activities.

Periodic hazards:

- Over a decade, roughly one to three years during the ten year period will be affected by extreme climate conditions which risk damaging the potential harvest, such as frost, insufficient rain or cyclones.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increase in kitchen gardening activities for sale, especially close to rivers and streams
- Growing maize near to the rivers and seasonal stream beds

Distress strategies:

- Consumption of most of the green maize, so that there is very little to harvest
- Reduction in the quantity of food and the number of meals eaten in the day

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Low yields for maize, which usually keeps prices for this staple crop higher than normal. This is particularly serious if it coincides with low wage rates for employment.
- Low market prices for main cash crops which could mean that farmers are unable to recover their production costs.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 8: Eastern Kalahari Sandveld Communal

Main Conclusions and Implications

Livelihoods in this zone are built around three main activities: agriculture, animal husbandry and migration labor. Maize and sorghum farming is widespread but production is unreliable as the zone is semi-arid. Livestock and remittances are a key safety net for better off households whereas for the poor, income earned from local work is their mainstay.

Zone Description

This zone lies in western Zimbabwe, covering the communal lands of Lupane, Nkayi, Western Zhombe, Silobela, Inkosikazi and Manyame in the districts of Lupani, Western KweKwe, Bubi and Gweru. The mean annual rainfall is less than 620 mm and the land is classified as Natural Region IV. The zone includes the forest reserves of Ngamo, Gwaii Mbembesi, Lake Alice and Gwampa, which provide excellent opportunities for (illegally) hunting wild game and for felling timber for sale. It is also near to important labor markets, both local (such as the tourist locations of Victoria Falls and Hwange National Park, the local mines and the Agriculture Rural Development Association Government agricultural schemes), as well as across the border into South Africa and Botswana.

Some limited cash crops are grown including cotton, groundnuts and paprika but these are not widespread. The production of paprika has fluctuated over the past few years mainly in response to the market which has been dominated by one international buyer offering unfavorably low prices. Despite the various income earning opportunities available, the area receives government drought relief fairly regularly.

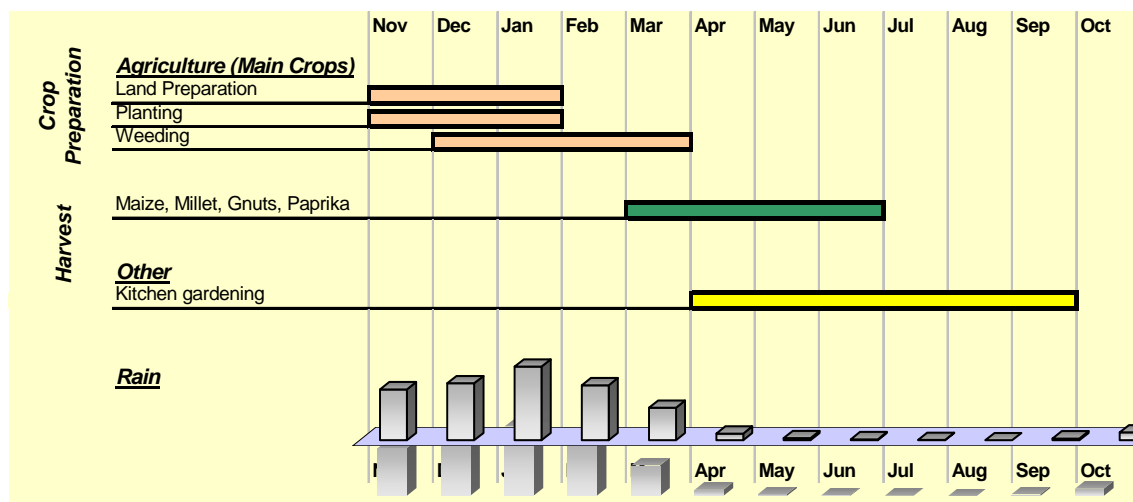
Markets

The main commodity markets are local; traders and private buyers come into the area to purchase produce for resale in Bulawayo or Lupane, usually to Government parastatals such as the Grain Marketing Board. Cotton Company of Zimbabwe generally offers lower farm gate prices for cotton than the smaller buyers, but all purchasers sell inputs to the farmers on credit.

The main labor markets are the local mines and agricultural projects as well as large urban centers in Zimbabwe (chiefly Bulawayo), tourist locations such as Victoria Falls and Hwange and across the border in South Africa and Botswana.

Seasonal Calendar

The main crops grown are maize and millet. While millet is planted dry just before the rains start, maize is planted with the rain. The calendar shows the main harvest times although some of the maize harvest is eaten fresh in February, before the main harvest is ready. This is an important source of food to bridge the gap between the previous and the next harvest. Other crops grown include sorghum, groundnuts and beans. The main vegetables grown in the region are tomatoes and onions.



Wealth Breakdown

Wealth in this zone depends on three main factors: remittances received from family members working elsewhere, livestock holdings and farming capacity. The latter in turn depends on the size of the fields, household labor availability and access to farming implements. Better off households usually own a plough, traction animals, carts, harrow and other tools. Moreover, they can afford to employ other people to work for them during periods of intense agricultural activity. Most households own some animals in this zone. Whereas most of the poor own only a few chickens and maybe one goat, a rich household typically owns around 30 cattle and the same number of goats. Both middle-income and better off households are likely to own donkeys which are used for working in the fields or for transport. Poor households rely on the rich as a potential source of local employment, especially during difficult times.

Sources of Food

Despite the relatively short rainy season, cereal crop production contributes significantly to the annual food needs of better off households. The poor by contrast rely mostly on market purchase as their main source of food. With the relatively poor rains over the recent years, food aid has made a significant contribution to meeting food needs of households from all wealth groups. The abundant forests and national parks mean that wild foods and hunted animals are an important source of food and greatly improve the quality of the diet. Typical foods collected are mushrooms, *mopane* worms and fruits. Various types of deer are the main game hunted for food.

Sources of Cash

The chief ways that households earn an income depends on their wealth status. For instance, better off households earn most of their annual income from migratory labor to South Africa, Botswana, Hwange National Park or Victoria Falls (earnings are remitted back home), combined with cattle and goat sales. A small, supplementary source of income is earned through crop and vegetable sales. Some cash crops such as cotton and, to a much smaller extent paprika, are grown opportunistically when conditions allow. Food crops which are sold (mainly maize, millet and groundnuts) are not high income earners. Poor households by contrast have more diverse income sources which are more dependent on their physical labor capabilities. Most of their income is earned from local casual work (for instance on ARDA schemes or for local mining companies) or by felling and selling timber from the nearby park and forest land. Gold panning is likewise an important income source. As this zone is near tourist areas there are income opportunities in craft sales.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- Living near to the national parks, forest areas and former game ranches means that crops are at constant risk of invasion by wild animals especially just before harvest time.

- Households that extensively rely on the market for food and cash are exposed to market instability particularly arising from inflation and the resulting price increases.
- HIV/AIDS infection is also a major problem throughout this zone.

Periodic hazards:

- Within a decade, two years are drought years, which lead to severe reduction in crops harvested.
- Cash crops are affected by prices of inputs, access to credit, weather and international demand and markets. For instance the production of paprika has fluctuated over the past few years mainly in response to the market which has been dominated by an international buyer offering unfavorably low prices.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increase in number of people looking for work opportunities especially among their better off neighbors
- Increase in the amount of money that family members remit from migration employment
- Increased brewing of local beer, in particular illicit varieties
- Increased felling of trees for sale
- Increased consumption of wild fruits

Distress strategies:

- Reliance on government drought relief
- Involvement in illegal or socially unacceptable activities such as poaching, prostitution, cattle rustling and theft of property

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Increase in the number of people looking for work locally or who are crossing the border, principally into South Africa and Botswana. This could lead to a drop in the wage rate.
- Increase in the price of maize, especially when this occurs at the same time as a decrease in the local wage rate.
- Low yields of maize and millet.
- Decrease in the sale price of cattle and goats, usually linked to a disease epidemic or to increase in animal sales.
- Increase in the volume of timber and firewood for sale, often at relatively low prices.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 9: Greater Northern Gokwe High Cotton Producing Communal ²⁵

Main Conclusions and Implications

Livelihood success in this zone depends on the rain fed cultivation of maize and cotton. A household's capacity to produce enough to meet its food needs is a general determinant of social status. Poor farming households produce too little to cover their needs and hence they supplement their food needs with purchase, labor exchange and food aid. This market dependence exposes them to unfavorable price fluctuations, such as when local wages do not keep pace with staple food price increases. Data for this profile is from 2002/03: a year characterized by rampant inflation and a high input of food aid. These factors should be taken into account when interpreting the picture presented here.

Zone Description

This zone in the north of the country is known for being one of the most productive in the country. It spreads across parts of the five districts: Gokwe South, Gokwe North, Kariba, Hurungwe and Makonde. Classified as Natural Region IV, average annual rainfall is around 790 mm. Despite its dry, hot climate and relatively low water table, in normal years this zone supplies neighboring zones with staple grain. Livelihoods are primarily agricultural, centered on growing maize for food and sorghum and cotton for cash. Cash crop sales provide a key income source for the majority of households and recent years have seen an increased area of cotton grown, at the expense of staple food crops. This is because with its low rainfall and high temperatures this zone is ideally suited to growing cotton. Households have slightly larger animal holdings than in the neighboring zones. In particular, there is a greater investment in dairy farming. Other income generating activities include local employment, gold panning and handicraft sales.

Markets

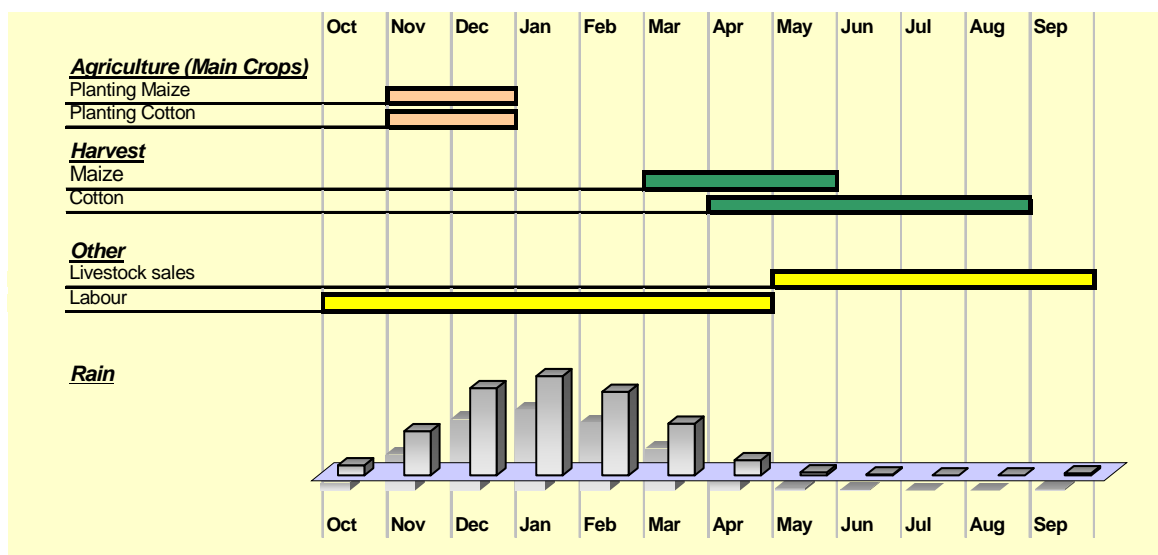
The main commodities are exchanged through Government parastatals. Cotton is sold to the Cotton Company in Chireya, Nembudziya, Manoti, Nemangwe and Tchoda or through Cargill, Grafax, FSI Agricom and IDAI Companies. The cotton ginnery at Gokwe centre also purchases from the farmers. Cotton arrives at these depots via a network of cotton collection points which exist at most business centers throughout the zone. The same urban centers also act as a focus for selling animals, which are also sold to local butcheries and beef clubs. Vegetables, groundnuts, thatch and beer are sold locally. The Chibuku Brewery in KweKwe purchases sorghum from local farmers.

The main employment opportunities are local, although some households have a family member working in major urban centers (mainly Harare but also Gokwe, Gweru, Bulawayo, KweKwe) or in the mines. Gold panning occurs at Munyati, Sanyati and Kakwira.

Seasonal Calendar

The agricultural year starts in October with preparation of the fields. The main food crop grown is maize, supplemented by groundnuts, millet (pearl and finger), sorghum and some round nuts. Groundnuts need to be sown on sandy soil therefore only some parts of this zone are suitable for groundnut production. Maize is the first crop to be ready, as it can be eaten green before the main harvest. Green maize makes a valuable contribution to people's diet as it provides a source of food at a time when household stocks are low. Various wild foods are available throughout the year, mainly fruits and leaves with limited caloric value but they do add diversity to the diet.

²⁵ Save the Children (UK) - Risk Map Report-Zimbabwe. December 1996 by Julia Earl and William Moseley.



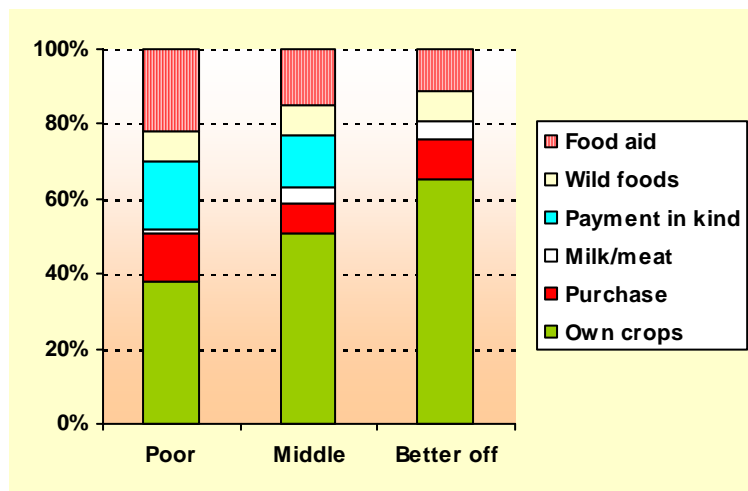
Wealth Breakdown

Wealth in this zone is dependent on the income from the sale of cotton and cereals rather than on land owned. When this area was opened for resettlement following the eradication of tsetse flies, all households were allocated the same 12 acres of land but access to labor and other inputs determine the amount of land cultivated. Better off households have sufficient resources – tools, hired labor, animal traction, fertilizer and so on – to cultivate larger areas of land and the produce a relatively good harvest. Some better off households own tractors or trucks which they use for both cultivation and transporting produce to the markets and sales points. By contrast the poor devote most of their land to food crops. Moreover, they must rent or borrow draught power. In addition, to meet immediate cash needs, many poor must look for work and this takes them away from critical tasks on their own fields. All of these factors reduce their potential harvest.

Children's educational levels are strongly linked to their potential income earning capabilities and in turn to a household's wealth status. Children from poor households tend to stop after completing compulsory primary school, while those from middle and better off households usually complete their secondary education. Some better off households send their children on to tertiary level education.

Wealth Group Information			
	HH size	Area planted and how	Livestock
Poor	7 members, of whom 3 active	2-3 acres food, mainly by hand	0-2 cattle, 2 goats, chickens
Middle	7 members, of whom 3 active	3-4 acres food, 0-2 acres cotton, with ploughs	2-4 cattle, 2-3 goats, 2-3 donkeys, chickens
Better-off	7-8 members, of whom 4 active	4-5 acres cereals, 4-5 acres cotton, with plough, harrow, cultivator	5-8 cattle, 5-6 goats, 1-2 donkeys, chickens
0% 20% 40% % of population			

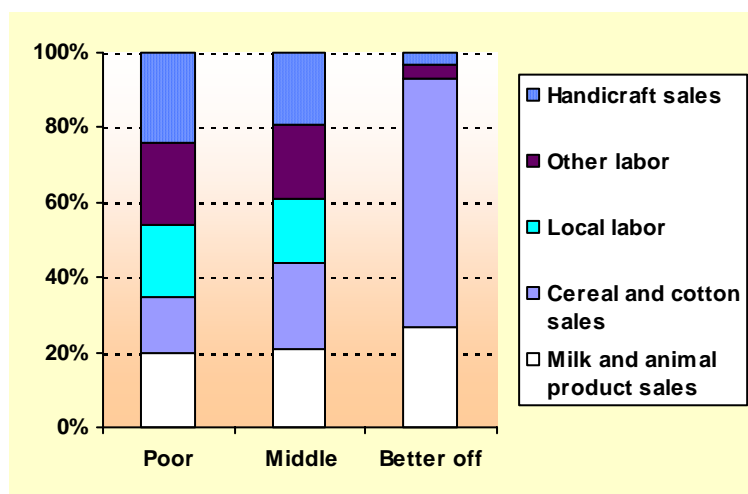
Sources of Food



The most important food source for all households in this zone is the consumption of their own crops. However the importance of own crop consumption as a proportion of annual food needs differs by wealth group (not surprisingly, own-crop consumption is highest for better off households). The consumption of meat (own chickens and goats) and milk is shown as own animal products in the graph on the left. The poor have very few animals, so therefore this source is minimal for them. In the reference year, both poor and middle households found jobs that paid in food rather than in cash. This is unusual and reflects a year of very good maize yields and a shortage of cash in the economy due to the very high inflation. Typically, a 20 kg bucket of maize is earned after a week of work. All households purchase some food over the year. In the reference year, this includes some barter by poor households who did

not have sufficient cash therefore they exchanged chickens, green vegetables, tomatoes or fish for maize. All households received some food aid within this zone, although aid distribution was not equal throughout the area.

Sources of Cash



Due to the rampant inflation over the past few years, it is difficult to compare income sources even within a twelve month period. These graphs have been calculated using the quantity of maize that could be purchased at the period of the activity, as a proxy for cash income. The pattern of income earning clearly reflects differences in socio-economic status. For instance, a large proportion of the annual household income for better off households comes from cereal and cotton sales. The poor grow mainly food crops; therefore their crop income came from the sale of vegetables such as rape and tomatoes. Nearly half of the income for poor households comes from employment. Only the middle and poor households look for seasonal agricultural work. Other labor activities include land clearing, house building, thatching and cutting grass. The main crafts that people make and sell include

baskets and mats. Livestock provide a considerable potential income source and households from all wealth groups sell a goat when they have extra expenses to cover. The poor also sell a few chickens when cash is needed. A further income source for some better off households is the hiring out of their trucks and scotch carts during harvest time to other farmers who need to transport their produce to market.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- Crop pests, wild animals and foot and mouth disease and anthrax are regular problems that households in this zone have to contend with.
- A major concern however is the marketing of their produce; cotton prices are dictated by the international market and farmers have to speculate on whether or not they will be able to cover their production costs.
- As with the rest of the country, inflation remains a persistent threat to household livelihood security.
- Malaria is an annual threat to human health, which is most prevalent between April and July and can have a severe impact on people's ability to work.

- HIV/AIDS is similarly a chronic problem than affects many households in this zone and which limits productivity and increases household expenditure on health care.
- A few households live near to Chirisa Game Reserve and every year their crops are at risk of damage by wild animals, especially elephants between December and May.

Periodic hazards:

- Roughly every 3 in ten years the zone is affected by a drought.
- The chemicals used in cotton production are hazardous and very often farmers do not wear protective clothing therefore they run the risk of diseases associated with the sprays.
- Foot and mouth disease and anthrax are two diseases that affect livestock periodically in this zone.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increased consumption of wild foods
- Reduction in non-essential household expenditure

Distress strategies:

- Food aid distributions
- Reduction in number of meals and quantity of food consumed

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Decrease in the yields of maize usually accompanied by an increase in market prices.
- Decrease in the yields of cotton. Note that overall production of maize and cotton are not necessarily reliable indicators of distress because farmers speculate on planting each according to which is likely to give the better returns.
- Increase in the number of people who are looking for work. This usually leads to a drop in the rate they can earn for - labor which is particularly serious if it coincides with a period when the price of staple cereals is high.
- Increase in the number of animals on sale at the market, especially since this could lead to a drop in prices.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 10: Great Zimbabwe and Bikita Semi-intensive Communal

Main Conclusions and Implications

This zone has a relatively high potential for rain-fed agriculture. However the area is densely populated and this limits the land available for cultivation. Nevertheless intensive farming of maize and groundnuts provides most households with a fairly stable source of food and income throughout the year. Livelihoods of poorer households are more diverse than for the better off; they mix maize cultivation with local employment (such as in the Bikita mines) and some limited gold panning.

Zone Description

This is a potentially prosperous zone situated in the South-Eastern Middleveld of Masvingo Province and is classified as Natural Region III. Soils are relatively fertile and rainfall averages around 600-800 mm per year. Rain-fed agriculture dominates the rural economy. Maize and groundnuts are the primary crops, supplemented by other cereals and a few cash crops (for example cotton and sunflowers). One of the main limits to crop production is land access. The area is densely populated and therefore farmers' fields are correspondingly small. Cereal and cash crop cultivation is supplemented by various other income generating activities including local employment, brewing beer and animal husbandry. The zone includes the communal lands of Central Masvingo, Northern Mutirikwi, Northern Zaka and Western Bikita.

Cash crop production is a relatively precarious activity as farmers have to speculate on whether or not they will be able to cover their production costs. Sometimes it is more economically viable to plant cereals instead of cotton due to international market prices while a widespread fungal disease has recently affected yields of sunflowers.

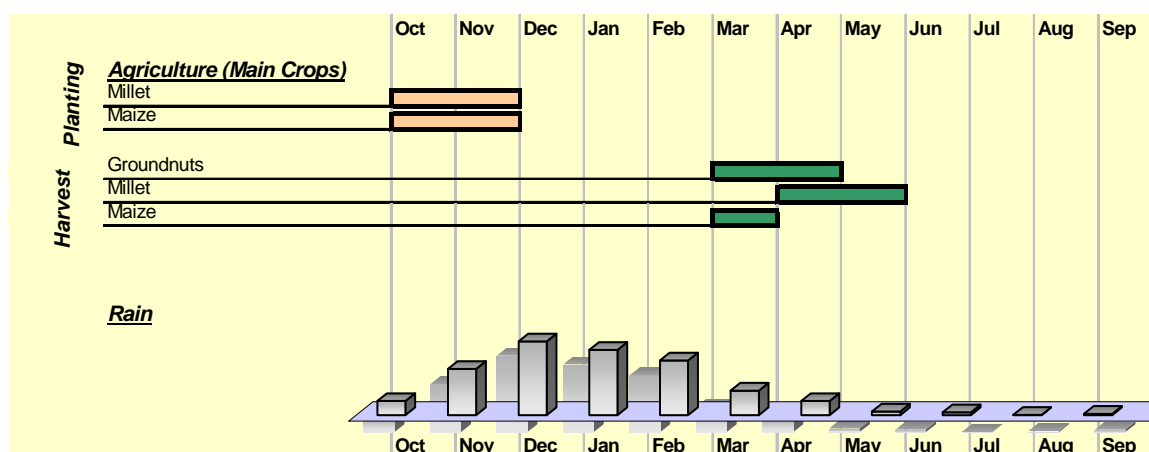
Markets

Cereal, in particular maize, is marketed through the Grain Marketing Board which has outlets in several urban centers. Livestock are sold on a small scale to local buyers. Cotton is sold to cotton companies such as Cotton Company of Zimbabwe, Cargil who process it for both the local and export market. Sunflowers are sold through local agents to the Grain Marketing Board.

The labor markets linked to this zone are all local within Zimbabwe. These include nearby local and commercial farms, the Bikita mines (which hires roughly 5,000 casual laborers) and local growth points (small urban centers).

Seasonal Calendar

The main cereal grown in this zone is rain fed maize. Other food crops include millet, groundnuts, roundnuts, beans, cowpeas and sweet potatoes. Some farmers cultivate cash crops such as cotton and sunflowers although in recent years this latter crop has been in decline due to a fungal disease which attacks the seeds. The months from August until the harvest in March are known as the 'hunger gap'. This is when household food stocks are low, prices of food are usually highest and there are limited cash earning opportunities. This hunger gap starts earlier and therefore lasts longer for poor than for better off households.



Wealth Breakdown

Wealth in this zone is linked to a number of factors, including the size of land cultivated, access to agricultural inputs (including plough, seeds and labor) and the type of supplementary income received. The poor cultivate by hand and their fields are relatively small. Moreover, they have to juggle their time between cultivating their own fields and employment on the farms of their better off neighbors so as to meet their immediate needs. As a result of these constraints, the poor tend to limit their production to cereals. By contrast better off households, with their extra land, labor and tools have more diversified food and cash crop production. Such households can afford to employ supplementary casual labor to work in their fields during periods of intense agricultural activity. There are differences in supplementary income linked to wealth group as well. Typically, better off households receive remittances sent by relatives in urban centers (Masvingo or Harare for example) while the poor earn cash as seasonal agricultural laborers on nearby farms. Demographic pressure and concentrated cereal cropping are two factors that limit the availability of grazing land in this zone and consequently animal herds are quite small. Poor households own mainly chickens while rich households typically own no more than 5 cattle as well as 10-15 smaller animals.

Sources of Food

Own crop production meets most of the annual energy needs of better off households in a normal year. Poorer households produce less therefore typically their harvest is only enough for about 4 months of the year. In dry years however the picture is very different and people rely more heavily on purchasing food or on receiving food aid. All households consume wild foods such as mushrooms, fruits and small animals (mice, crickets, termites, flying ants and so on), although this is on a minimal scale for the better off households and is only of some importance for the poor. While improving the quality and variety of the diet, in the quantities that they are consumed these wild foods do not contribute significantly to annual energy needs for the household.

Sources of Cash

The main sources of cash income are strongly linked to socio-economic category. The poor purchase much of their food during the year. Cash to buy food is primarily earned through reliance on the labor market. They earn money through gold panning or by finding work on local farms or in town or in the mines (for instance the Bikita Minerals Mines which hires roughly 5,000 casual laborers). Poorer households also receive some remittances from a lowly paid relative in an urban centre. As wealth increases so there is a decreasing reliance on labor and an increased reliance on remittances from relatives, usually in relatively well paid jobs in large towns, and some sale of cash crops. Middle-income households earn their income primarily by selling agricultural produce (maize, groundnuts and vegetables) as well as through sales of beer and, to a lesser extent, through employment. Sunflowers were a cash earner but in recent years have declined in production due to a fungal disease affecting the seeds and to poor rainfall.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- HIV/AIDS is a chronic problem in this zone, which has a negative impact on the economy of the household.
- Nearly every year, the harvest is at risk of attack from crop pests.

- Relying on the market for food purchases exposes the poorer households to price increases arising from the hyper inflationary environment.

Periodic hazards:

- Drought hits this zone roughly every three to ten years.
- Livestock disease such as foot and mouth or Newcastle disease for chickens affect this zone periodically.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increase in collection and consumption of wild foods
- Increase in remittances received from relatives working elsewhere
- Increase in assistance given by local better off households to their poorer neighbors
- Increased migration by able-bodied men to urban centers to look for work
- Increased borrowing of money from neighbors and family

Distress strategies:

- Reduction in the number of meals and the quantity of food eaten per day
- Increased poaching of wild animals and theft of property

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Reduction in the yields of maize and groundnuts as a result of a poor agricultural season. This might mean that prices do not fall at harvest time as they usually do. If cereal prices stay high then this it will be harder for people to afford to buy them.
- Increase in the number of people looking for work locally which could lead to a reduction in the daily labor rate. This is likely to be a problem especially if it coincides with high cereal prices.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 11: Greater Mudzi Communal

Main Conclusions and Implications

This lowveld zone is characterized by extensive rain-fed maize production supplemented by income earned through cotton production, gold panning and employment. Livelihood success largely depends on having sufficient land holdings and labor capacity. Better off households meet most of their food needs through own crop production; in this area the main crops are maize, small grains, sunflower and cotton. Poorer households by contrast cannot make ends meet from farming alone. Hence a diverse mix of income sources including employment and gold panning is the key to their food security.

Zone Description

This zone is situated in the north east corner of Zimbabwe, on the border with Mozambique. It includes the communal lands of Mkota, Ngarwe, Mudzi, Chikwizo, North-Eastern Mutoko, Nyanga North, Western Matzi, Eastern St. Swithins, Central Zimbiti, Tanda, Chikore, Chimanda and Masoso. This is classified as lowland in Natural Region IV and has a variable average annual rainfall under 700 mm. The zone is transected by a major tarmac road connecting Harare to Mozambique and Malawi, which facilitates trade and exchange. The Mudzi, Rwenya and Nyamusanzara Rivers pass through the zone, providing opportunities for some fishing and gold panning while the Makaha/Benson Mine provides some employment opportunities, in addition to the better off farmers within the villages who employ people to work in their fields.

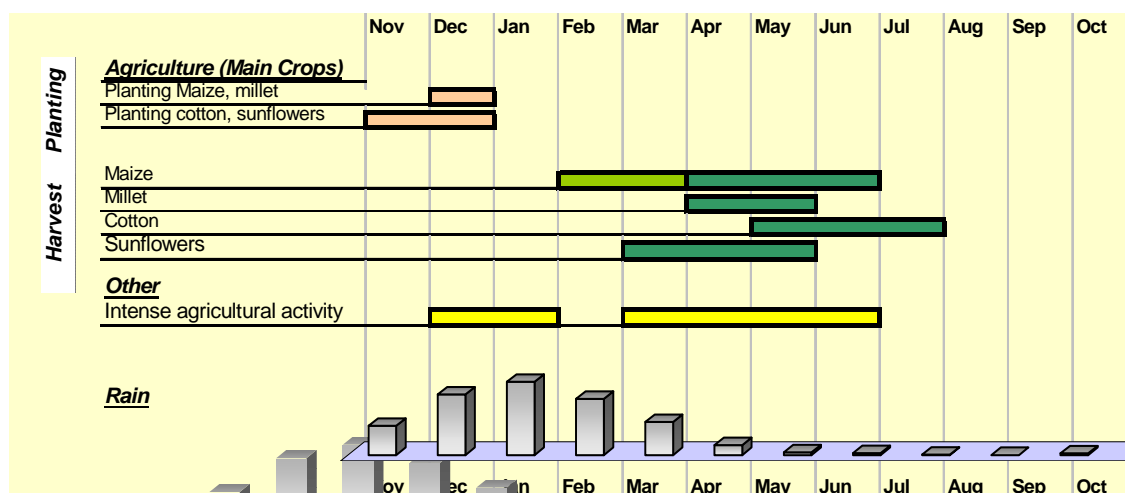
Markets

The main commodities produced within the zone are sold through private traders or directly to the Grain Marketing Board or Cotton Company of Zimbabwe, both of which are Government parastatals. Cereals are imported into the zone from Mutoko and Murewa which tend to have higher productivity levels, and sold through local stores. Cattle and goats are usually sold at local livestock pens where they are bought by agents looking for animals to take to the butcheries and abattoirs in Harare. There is also a lively cross border exchange with Mozambique for non agricultural produce (e.g., canned beer is sold from Zimbabwe and soap from Mozambique). This exchange is not limited to households from within the zone; there is a major border crossing point between the two countries at Nyamapanda, and people from many other parts of Zimbabwe travel across at that point.

Local labor opportunities include nearby commercial and larger communal farms as well as the Makaha/Benson Mine. Outside of the zone, Harare is the main urban labor market but some people go as far afield as Bulawayo and Mutare.

Seasonal Calendar

The main food crops planted in this zone are maize, sorghum, millet, groundnuts, Bambara nuts (round nuts) and cowpeas. There is also some limited rice grown. One advantage of maize is that it can be eaten green straight from the fields from February, before the main harvest, thereby providing a valuable source of food to households whose stocks are low or have finished. Various wild foods are available at different times throughout the year.



Wealth Breakdown

Wealth in this zone is strongly linked to factors of cultivation, namely access to sufficient land, labor and farm inputs and capital for investment. The poor with their limited resources juggle their time between working on their own land and earning an income to meet their immediate cash or food needs. Whereas poor households typically cultivate their fields manually, better off households use animal traction. Animal husbandry is important in this zone providing food and income mainly to the better off. A poor household might own a couple of goats and some chickens while a rich household is likely to own more than 5 cows and over 10 goats.

Sources of Food

In a good year the most important source of food for most households is their own crop production. However during the recent series of poor years all households have had to depend heavily on the market to meet their food needs. Maize dominates crop production (it is both a staple food as well as a cash crop). This zone has also received significant amounts of food aid in the last few years. For some households, especially for the poor, wild fruits and small game (e.g., mice, hares, tortoises and warthogs), as well as fishing – for instance along the Mazowe River – supplement agriculture.

Sources of Cash

The poorest households have much more diversified income sources than the better off. This reflects the uncertainty of each of their sources as well as the limited income that they are able to earn from each one. Some of the most common income sources for the poor include seasonal agricultural work, gold panning, employment in Harare or other urban centers, trading and collecting firewood for sale. All of these depend on the household's labor capacity. By contrast, better off households earn money chiefly through the sale of cash crops (especially cotton, groundnuts and tomatoes) and of livestock.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- The continuously fluctuating price of cotton makes it very difficult for farmers to plan whether or not to devote their land and efforts to this crop.
- Heavy reliance on the market for food exposes the households to frequent price increases which threaten access to food.

Periodic hazards:

- Roughly every three years the area is affected by drought which significantly reduces harvests.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increased reliance on purchasing maize
- Decrease in non-essential household expenditure
- Increased reliance on employment as a means of earning cash to purchase food

Distress strategies:

- Reduction in the number of meals and the quantity of food eaten per day

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Low market prices for maize compared with the high costs of production.
- High prices for maize just before the next harvest representing the scarcity of this commodity and the increase in demand for it as household stocks run low.
- An increase in the number of people looking for work locally which could lead to a reduction in wage rates. This is especially serious when it coincides with high prices for staple food.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 12: Highveld Prime Communal

Main Conclusions and Implications

Livelihoods in this prime agriculture zone centre around the production of both cash and food crops. Cultivation is highly diversified but, overall, maize is predominant as the staple food crop. Farmers in this zone are susceptible to prices fluctuations of cash crops which affect their income from year to year. The zone boundaries are now larger, to include newly resettled farmers who were allocated A1 plots on former commercial land as well as the farmers on communal lands. The newly resettled farmers are still getting established but their livelihoods are expected to gravitate towards the livelihoods of the communal farmers in this zone. Once they are settled, wealth definitions and the size of wealth groups in the zone will need to be re-identified.

Zone Description

This is one of the most productive communal lands livelihood zones in the country, a reflection of both adequate rainfall and good soils. The zone itself is scattered in small pockets of communal lands across the northern highveld, surrounded by former large-scale commercial farms. These prime communal lands are found in five provinces: Midlands, Manicaland and Mashonaland Central, East and West. The boundaries of this zone were expanded under the fast track resettlement program, and the enlarged zone now includes the new farms allocated under the A1 (self-contained) model. The area is classified as Natural Regions IIa, IIb and III and it enjoys a relatively high average annual rainfall of 650 to 1,000 mm. In addition to the rain-fed cultivation of food and cash crops, other livelihood activities include animal husbandry and formal and casual employment.

As this is prime agricultural land and densely populated, grazing land is very limited. On the one hand these conditions mean that the better off have far fewer livestock than their counterparts in other zones. On the other hand, as overall it is a wealthier zone, even most poor households own a cow. Fields are small (due to the high population) and are cultivated by hand (the poor) or animal traction (the better-off)²⁶. The main crops sold for income generations are maize, cotton, groundnuts, soya beans and tobacco. Certain cash crops such as paprika and cotton were previously more widespread. However the current high price for fertilizer means that farmers can no longer afford such expenses given the rampant inflation. By the time they sell their harvest, the price of inputs for the next season has usually increased beyond the cash they get from the previous harvest. The inadequacy of public transport and the poor road network also limits the marketing of produce.

Markets

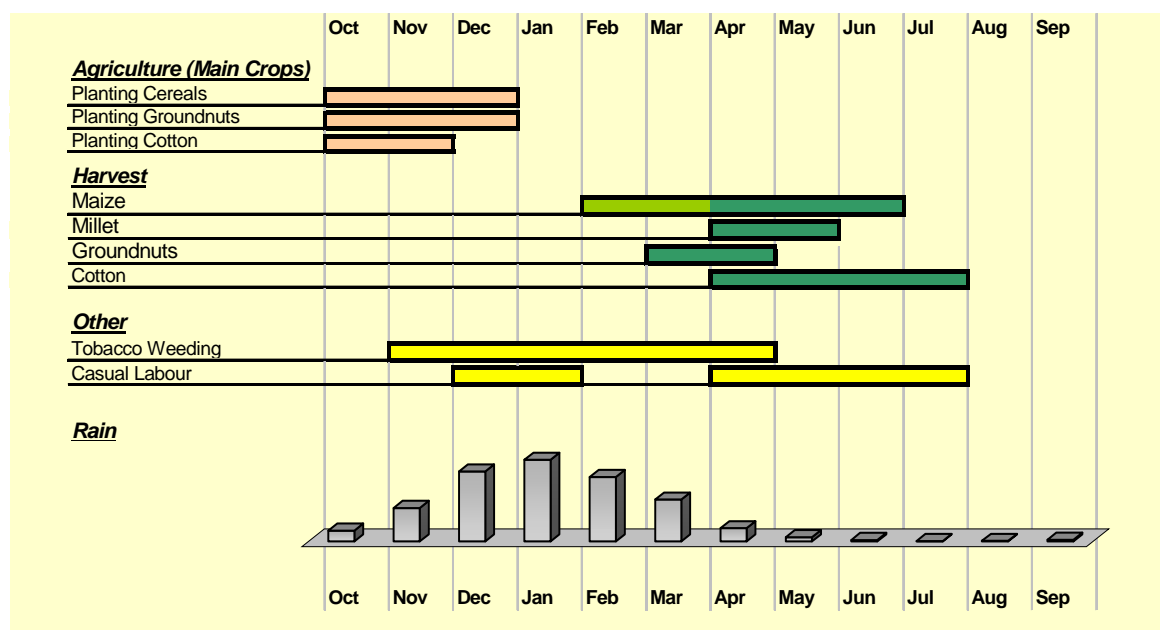
In normal years, this zone produces more grain than needed. Excess grain is sold directly to the Grain Marketing Board outlets or through private traders who act as middlemen. The main market for selling mangoes, tomatoes and rape is in nearby Harare at Mbare market but these are also sold at urban centers throughout the zone. Mangoes from this area are very popular and are sold as far away as Botswana. Cash crops such as tobacco and cotton are sold to contractors. The market for paprika on the other hand is dominated by one company which fixes both prices and the minimum quantity it will buy. Livestock are sold to private buyers and local butcheries. The Livestock Development Trust also organizes sales pens throughout the zone. A number of major roads pass through or near the zone, providing an opportunity to sell thatch, wild foods, fruits (peaches and plums), handicrafts and vegetables to passing vehicles.

The main labor market is local: either casual work on the fields of richer households or permanent employment on the local estates and mines (e.g., Inyati). Households from all wealth groups, but particularly from the better off, have a family member working in a large town elsewhere in Zimbabwe (e.g., Harare, Bulawayo, Bindura, Mutare and Gweru).

Seasonal Calendar

²⁶ Farm sizes are small except for those farms of newly resettled farmers who were recently allocated 6 ha of arable land under the A1 model.

Much of the agriculture in this zone is rain-fed although a few of the newly resettled farmers have inherited irrigation equipment. Although agricultural labor is needed throughout the growing season, it peaks around December/January for weeding and from April to June for the harvest. Poorer households have to juggle their time during this period, obliged to decide whether to cultivate their own fields or find employment elsewhere so as to meet their immediate needs. The main food crops grown are maize, groundnuts, sorghum, millet, vegetables. People also grow beans, Bambara nuts and peas. The main harvesting period for maize starts in April, but from February it can be eaten green from the fields. This acts as a valuable food source to break the traditional 'hunger gap' when household food stocks are generally low. The important cash crops are vegetables (grown throughout the year), sunflower, flue-cured (Virginia) tobacco, paprika and cotton. Surplus food crops are also sold to earn money. A number of wild fruits, mushrooms and edible insects including caterpillars, mice and flying ants are available in this zone at different times throughout the year. The main period for mangoes is during January and February.



Wealth Breakdown

Wealth in this zone is linked to the area of land cultivated and animal holdings. Better off households have more assets including land, livestock, farm inputs and savings. They generally have a member of the household who is working in town therefore they have the cash to invest in their land. In the future this group will include some of the newly resettled farmers, once these have become established. Households from all wealth groups cultivate cash and food crops. However, only the poor combine own-crop production with employment to secure food and other needs during the year. Most households have access to animal traction. Those who don't own plough oxen hire draught power to cultivate their fields. Typical better off households own around 10 cattle and some goats, while the middle-income households have 4-5 cattle. The poor generally do not own cattle; they own a few chickens and maybe some goats.

Sources of Food

Unlike many other livelihood zones within Zimbabwe, own crop production is the most important source of food for all households. Even poor households with their smaller landholdings and limited access to labor usually cover around half of their annual food needs in this way. These poorer households supplement agricultural production through food purchased with cash earned through employment.

Sources of Cash

The sale of cash crops including cotton, paprika, tobacco, maize and garden vegetables is a major income generating activity for most households in this zone, especially for middle and better off households. The better off also earn money through hiring out their oxen to pull ploughs. Poorer households, by contrast, have few surplus crops to sell. Instead they find employment to earn cash. They work on the farms of the better off households, or on nearby commercial farms. The commercial farms were

extensively affected by the fast track land reform program so local labor opportunities are limited. The relative proximity of Harare means that the capital city is a magnet for migration work, as is Marondera, for people from all wealth groups.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- HIV/AIDS is a risk to household economy in this zone, with its devastating impact on labor capacity and expenditure.
- Near the national parks, crop damage by wild pigs and zebra are quite common, while damage by baboons, birds and monkeys is widespread throughout the zone.
- Thefts of property (in particular crops and livestock) are another regular problem in this zone.
- With the heavy reliance on the sale of cash crops, the fluctuating international markets are a regular concern to farmers, who face the risk that they might not meet their production costs if the offering price is too low.

Periodic hazards:

- Roughly once every three years or so harvests are attacked by crop pests such as army worm.
- With the same frequency, cattle diseases affect the herds.
- Similarly once every three years too much rain falls, which also has a negative impact on the harvest.
- Given the importance of this zone as a surplus grain producer supplying maize nationally, any problems with the harvest are not limited just to this zone but are felt throughout the country.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increase in the number of people who migrate to Harare, Marondera or other urban centers in search of work
- Decrease in non-essential expenditure

Distress strategies:

- Reduction in the number of meals and the quantity of food consumed
- Reliance on wild foods
- Children drop out of school

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Trends in the production of maize and of its price – too low a price means that producers might find it difficult to cover their costs; too high a price means that households who rely on the market might not be able to afford to buy.
- Market prices for the main cash crops, namely vegetables, paprika and tobacco. If the price is anticipated to be too low then producers might prefer to cultivate a more economically viable crop.
- An increase in the number of people looking for work, which could saturate the market and lead to a reduction in the labor wage rate. This would be especially serious if it coincided with a period when the price of staple food is high.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 13: Irrigated Commercial Sugar and Fruit Farming

Main Conclusions and Implications

The households described in this profile include at least one person who has a permanent job on the large-scale irrigated plantations in south-eastern Zimbabwe. Depending on their labor capacity and savings, households generate income through seasonal employment or small-scale trading on the estate where they work.

Zone Description

Located in the south-eastern lowveld of Zimbabwe, Zone 13 includes households who live and work permanently on the irrigated commercial sugar, cotton and fruit estates in Beitbridge, Triangle and Hippo Valley and in Chipinge District. These estates are dominated by two companies: Anglo American and Middle Sabi Estates. The livelihoods of these workers are based on their earnings from employment supplemented by some other income generating activities such as sales of goods (e.g., chickens, crocheted articles, mats and wild game) and/or sales of services (e.g., sewing). Some households also have a small kitchen garden. There are important differences in access to these various supplementary activities, largely dependent on four factors: whether or not (i) the employer allows their workers to have a small plot of land; (ii) the workers have free access to water for irrigation; (iii) the workers are permitted to own some chickens and (iv) the workers live near to forested areas where game such as kudu and impala is to be found. This arid zone is categorized as Natural Region V, with average annual rainfall of 372 mm. Agricultural activities can only succeed with irrigation.

Markets

Farm workers purchase nearly all of their annual food needs, often from the local farm store. The small trade in chickens and eggs, handicrafts, vegetables and game meat occurs on a very local basis to other workers in the estate or on nearby communal lands. Sometimes handicrafts may be sold in Harare or South Africa, and vegetables in nearby urban areas, but usually only by women who have the means to travel.

Seasonal Calendar

Given that livelihoods depend on employment on the estates, households are in some way protected from seasonal fluctuations. In addition to the main employment however there are opportunities for other household members to find seasonal work as laborers on the estates, mainly between April and November. In difficult years the permanent workers (at least one per household) retain their jobs. Therefore the impact is mainly felt in the loss of opportunities for supplementary activities and in increased cereal prices.

Wealth Breakdown

Wealth among the farm worker households in this zone depends on the skill category of the permanent worker employed on the estate. The richest households, around a quarter of the laboring population in the zone, are those where there is at least one skilled laborer. Middle households make up around half of the population and have at least one unskilled permanent laborer working on the estate as well as a second person who does seasonal work. The poorest quarter of the population consists of those households with an unskilled permanent employee on the estate but without anyone else who can do seasonal work.

Sources of Food

Nearly all of the food that households consume is purchased at the local farm shop and other opportunities for obtaining food are extremely limited. Purchasing power is therefore strongly affected by cereal prices. A very few households who live on the estates have access to a small plot of irrigated land grow some vegetables and sweet potatoes for household consumption or sale.

Sources of Cash

Estate employment is the most important source of income in this zone, which in turn depends on the skill level of the employee and on the number of people in the household who work either permanently or on a seasonal basis. People living and working on the fruit farms are usually paid less than those on the sugar farms but they are given substandard fruit which they sell and which contributes fairly significantly to their annual income. Better off households who are able to raise the capital also buy food and non food goods outside the farm to re-sell to their colleagues. In the past few years, some households have started to engage in selling handicrafts (especially mats made out of reeds or baobab leaves) and, on a very limited scale, gold panning. Beer is brewed on a small scale, for sale to neighbors.

Hazards

Permanent workers on the farms are protected to some extent because they keep their jobs even during difficult times. However up to half of the usual seasonal labor force might not be employed in a bad year. This particularly affects the middle-income and poor wealth group households who depend on seasonal labor to supplement the income from unskilled permanent employment. Once or twice in a decade there is a bad year in the surrounding maize producing zones (in particular the Masvingo Mutare Middleveld, the Save River Valley and Ndowoyo Communal and the Mwenezi Central Chivi and South Midlands Zones). At such times the price of maize in the sugar and fruit commercial zone increases and as this often coincides with a reduction in agricultural work opportunities, this makes it particularly hard for poorer households with fewer alternative options to make ends meet. HIV / AIDS infection is a widespread problem in this zone, which has a serious limiting impact on the household's labor capacity and leads to increased expenses for health care.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies

- Increased reliance on and requests for remittances from family members working in town or in other countries
- Increased reliance on employment opportunities
- Increased reliance on purchased maize
- Increased reliance on making handicrafts for sale in town
- Increased reliance on brewing local beer

Distress strategies:

- Children taken out of school, either to work on the farm or to earn cash
- People turn to theft of property and poaching

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Increased number of people looking for work opportunities. This could lead to a reduction in the daily labor wage rate and is particularly serious if it coincides with an increase in food prices.
- Increase in the prices of cereals especially maize.
- Reduced overall crop yields
- Increased volume of handicrafts for sale in town, often at lower than usual prices

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 14: Lusulu, Lupane and Southern Gokwe Mixed Agriculture ^{27 28 29}

Main Conclusions and Implications

This zone is relatively favorable for agricultural production. Livelihoods are centered on maize and cotton cultivation with animal husbandry providing supplementary food and income. Poorer households, additionally, take on local jobs to earn much needed cash when food stocks run low. Data for this profile are based on the reference year 2002-2003. This period was noted for the combination of rampant inflation and limited cereal availability due to drought and fuel shortages. The information presented below should be considered in this light.

Zone Description

This zone is classified as Natural Regions III and IV. Rainfall is fairly reliable and averages 450-800 mm per year. In normal years, agriculture is relatively successful; the zone is traditionally known as a cereal surplus producing area. In general, livelihoods are based on cereal and cash crop cultivation supplemented by animal husbandry and employment. Despite the fact that conditions are well suited to agriculture, infrastructure in this part of Zimbabwe is poor. Hence marketing of goods is difficult and the price received by farmers is low. The main crops grown are maize and cotton, with some millet and sorghum. Over the past few years, cotton production has fluctuated greatly in response to changes in international demand and price. When demand and price are low, farmers favor planting maize over cotton.

The zone covers the communal areas of southern Binga, northern Lupane, southern Dabola, southern Gokwe, northern Kwekwe and Kadoma Districts in the north west of the country. It is ethnically mixed, including Shona, Ndebele and Tonga. One part of this zone, around Lusulu, has only been settled in the past ten or so years following a tsetse fly eradication program. The Kadoma River passes through the zone, providing opportunities for fishing and gold panning.

Markets

The main cereal exchange occurs through the Grain Marketing Board which has outlets in Gokwe, Kadoma, Lusulu and Bulawayo. Livestock are sold to local butchers, to the abattoir in KweKwe or the Cold Storage Commission in Bulawayo and KweKwe. For both cereals and animals, rural producers sell to middle men who come to the villages.

People mostly find employment locally, such as on the irrigated ARDA schemes. Some people travel further afield in Zimbabwe, for example to Hwange or Victoria Falls, and more rarely to Botswana or South Africa. Gold panning occurs at sites widely scattered throughout the zone.

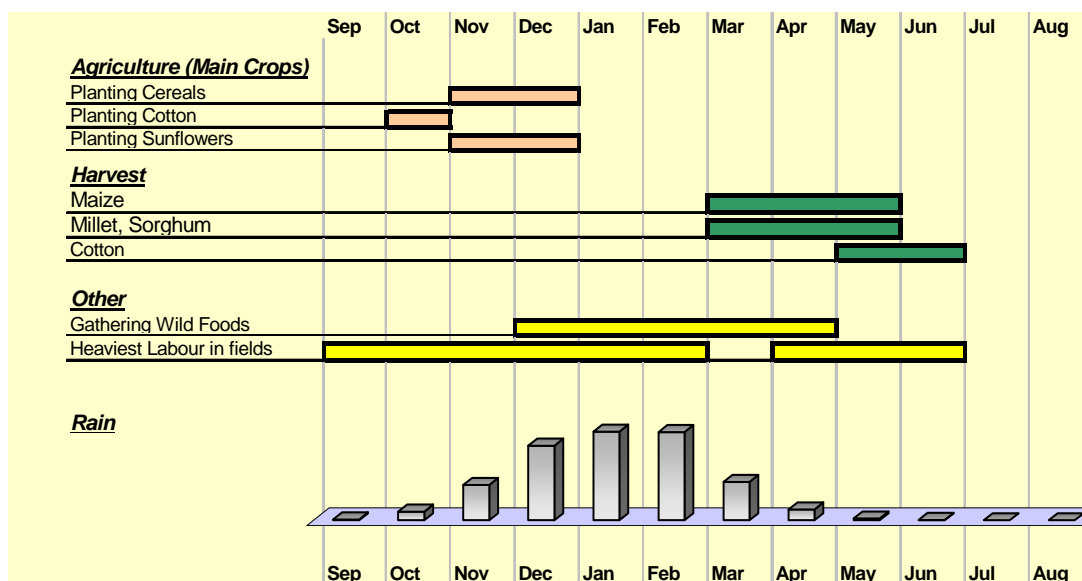
Seasonal Calendar

Rain-fed agriculture is practiced in this zone. The main cereal planted is maize. Sorghum, millet, groundnuts, pumpkins, beans and sweet potatoes are grown in smaller quantities. Within the zone there are several wild foods collected including fruits, leaves, mushrooms and small animals. These wild foods are mainly collected during the rainy season when they make a valuable contribution to the diet at a time when stocks are usually running low. Poor households work in the fields of their better off neighbors during periods of high agricultural activity. This work includes clearing fields prior to planting in August and September, weeding from December to February and harvesting from March to June.

²⁷ Save the Children. April – May 2004. *Household Economy Assessments*. Binga & Nyaminyami (Kariba Rural) Districts, Matabeleland North & Mashonaland West Provinces, Zimbabwe, Final report (2004).

²⁸ Save the Children. April 2003. *Household Economy Assessments*. Binga & Nyaminyami (Kariba Rural) Districts, Matabeleland North & Mashonaland West Provinces Zimbabwe. Final Report 30 May 2003.

²⁹ Save the Children (UK) - Risk Map Report-Zimbabwe. December 1996 by Julia Earl and William Moseley.



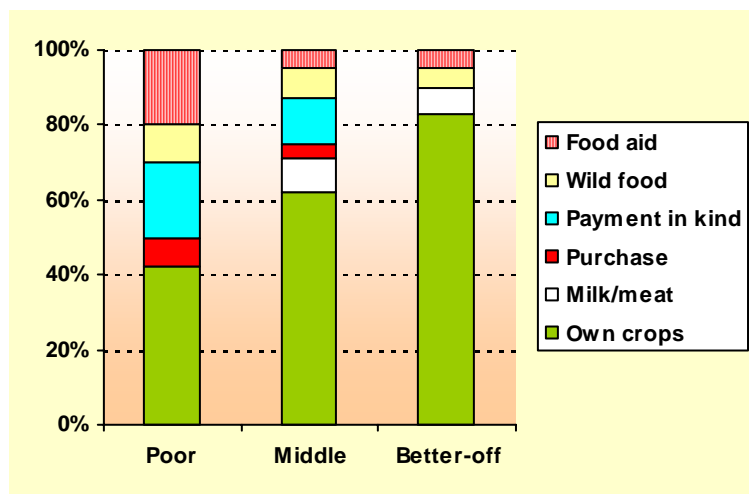
Wealth Breakdown

Wealth in this zone is determined by three factors: (i) the area of land cultivated; (ii) the type of crop planted; and (iii) the number of animals owned. Most poorer households limit cultivation to cereals only. Typically, they plant a mix of maize, sorghum and millet. This crop mix spreads the risk in case any one of the crops fails. Most of the harvest is consumed although some sorghum is used to brew beer. Middle and better off households are better able to gamble on the season. In general they concentrate on maize and cotton and plant few other cereals. Wealthier households also have the productive assets (land, labor – family and hired - ox ploughs and cart) needed for successful agriculture. The poor cultivate a smaller area due in part to labor constraints. Typically the poor have to juggle their time between tending their own fields and finding some other means of earning food or cash to meet short term needs. About half of the cattle owned tend to be milking cows and milk this contributes a source of protein and calories to the diet of middle and better off households. When milk supplies are plentiful, better off households share some with poorer neighbors. While cattle are kept by wealthier households mainly as a source of savings rather than a commodity to be exchanged for food, goats are more commonly sold when the household has extra expenses to cover.

Polygamy is fairly common in this zone. Men from wealthier households are more likely to have a second or even a third wife. The educational attainment of children is strongly linked to their potential income earning capabilities. Children of poor households tend to stop after completing compulsory primary school. Those from wealthier households usually complete their secondary education.

Wealth Group Information				
		HH size	Area planted and how	Livestock
Poor	<div><div></div></div>	6 - 7 members	1 -1.5 ha, by hand	0-2 cattle, 1-2 goats
Middle	<div><div></div></div>	7 - 8 members	1.5 - 3 ha, ox plough	3-6 cattle, 2-4 goats, 2-3 donkeys
Better-off	<div><div></div></div>	7 - 8 members	4 - 5 ha, ox plough	7-10 cattle, 7-10 goats, 2-3 sheep, 2-3 donkeys
0% 20% 40% % of population				

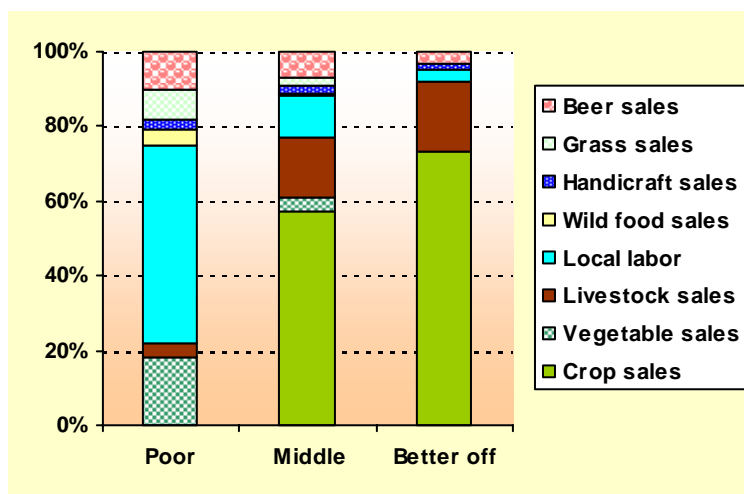
Sources of Food



The consumption of own crop cereals is by far the most important source of food for all households. While for middle and better off households this is mainly maize, the poor consume higher amounts of sorghum and millet. Households also produce groundnuts and sweet potatoes for their own consumption. The poor own so few animals that own animal products do not feature as a source of food for them, whereas it is more important for middle and better off households. Food purchase makes a minor contribution to all households. This reflects a particularly bad year when in 2002/3 the supplies at the Grain Marketing Board were erratic. Even people with money could not buy grain. It is striking that the poor and middle-income households met their annual food needs with the supplement of food aid. What is not clear is whether in the absence of food aid, such households would have been able to afford to purchase grain, if it had been available.

Sources of Cash

There are striking differences in sources of household income between the 'rich' and 'poor'. Middle and better off households earn their money chiefly from crop sales but also from livestock sales. The poor on the other hand find work either in the fields of their better off neighbors or in town on construction and well digging jobs. The poor also sell thatch grass, handicrafts (such as crocheted items) and some wild foods. Households from all wealth groups brew beer for sale. Proportional to annual income, beer sales are highest for poor households. However in absolute terms, middle-income households sell the largest quantities of home brewed beer.



Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- Poor infrastructure means that marketing of produce is difficult and producers often do not earn favorable prices.
- Purchased goods are usually relatively expensive for the same reason.
- There are very few income generating opportunities in this area that people can fall back on in a difficult year.
- HIV/AIDS is a persistent problem that affects household labor capacity and can lead to increased expenditure on health care.
- Crop pests and livestock diseases such as anthrax affect farmers in this zone.

Periodic hazards:

- Over a decade, roughly 1-3 years will be a drought.
- Hail affects this zone with the same frequency.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increase in the consumption of wild foods
- Decreased expenditure on non-essential items
- Increased sales of livestock

Distress strategies:

- Increased requests for food aid distributions and support programs
- Reduction in the number of meals and in the overall quantity of food eaten

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Low maize yields, often leading to higher than normal prices, even just after the harvest.
- Increase in the sales of livestock or livestock products including milk, usually accompanied by a drop in prices. If cattle rather than goats are being sold then this indicates a serious problem.
- Increase in the number of people looking for seasonal work locally, especially if this leads to a decrease in the daily wage rate for labor. Such a situation would be exacerbated by an increase in the price of maize.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profile

Zone 15: Masvingo Mutare Middleveld Communal

Main Conclusions and Implications

Livelihoods in this zone are primarily agricultural but due to the dry climate, crop production alone is an unreliable food and income source, and animal husbandry makes up the balance for better off households. As elsewhere, gold panning, beer sales and casual work are the main sources of cash income for the poor. This communal area expanded in the last few years. It now includes farmers settled on the A1 villagized scheme. The process of land reform affected seasonal agricultural employment, largely decreasing employment opportunities. However, in time, A1 farmers may hire labor and improve job opportunities for poor households looking for local work.

Zone Description

This livelihood zone comprises households living in the mid-lowveld area of eastern and south-eastern Zimbabwe, including parts of Masvingo and Manicaland Provinces. It covers southern Buhera, Zaka, southern Bikita, southern Chivi and southern Mutare. Most of the land is classified as Natural Region IV. Mean annual rainfall is 450-650 mm. Livelihoods are characterized by cereal agriculture supplemented by cash cropping, animal husbandry and remittances from migration labor usually within Zimbabwe. The main cash crops grown in this zone are groundnuts, sunflowers and cotton. The Runde and Tokwe Rivers pass through the zone, as do a number of seasonal small rivers and streams. These provide limited opportunities for fishing and gold panning. With the recent land redistribution program, the communal areas within the zone have expanded and now include some A1 villagized farms.

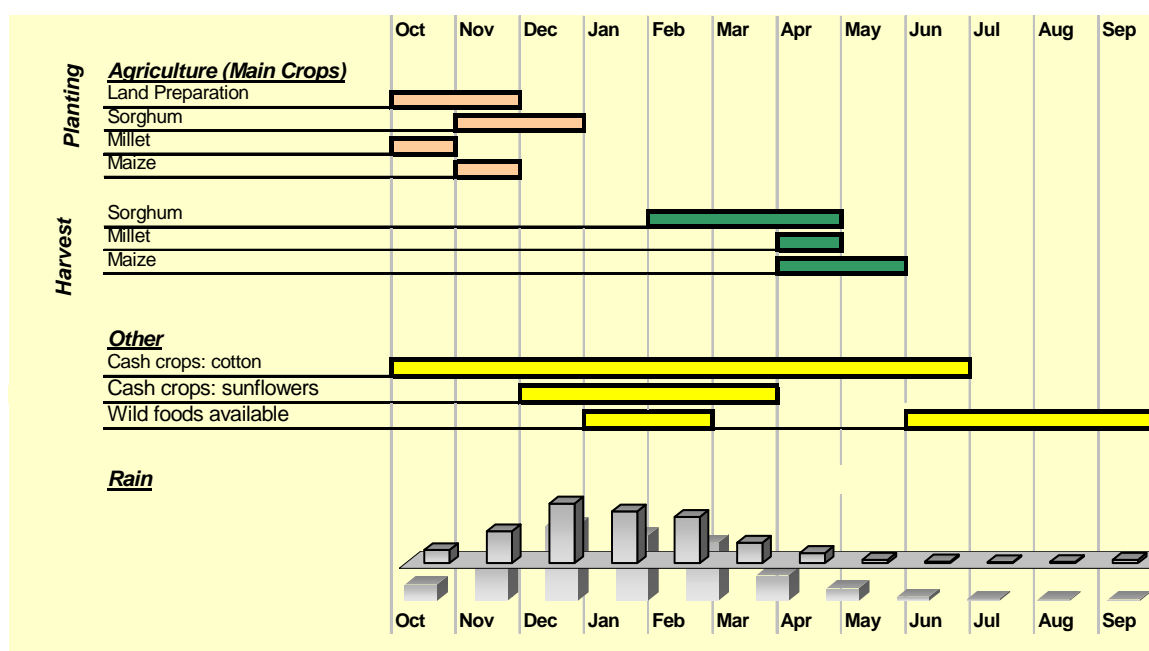
Markets

The main commodity exchanges take place via middle men who form a key link between the remote villages and the Grain Marketing Board, butcheries in urban centers and the Cold Storage Commission.

Mining offers important labor opportunities. In this zone there is both gold panning and chrome mining. Labor markets range from local opportunities (working on the fields of the richer households within the village) or further afield in major urban centers such as Harare, Masvingo and Chiredzi.

Seasonal Calendar

A wide variety of rain-fed cereal crops are grown including sorghum (both early and late maturing varieties), millet (pearl and finger) and maize. The harvest period starts in February and continues through to April/May. Maize can be consumed green from the fields before the harvest is ready which makes it a valuable crop to shorten the hunger gap when household stocks are very low and the main harvest is not yet ready. In August/September, households that own cattle collect the manure from the cattle *kraal* and pile it in the fields ready for spreading later on. The period of intense agricultural activity starts with land preparation in October, when manure is spread in the fields before they are ploughed, ready for planting. This is followed by weeding activities until the time of the harvest. Many different wild foods including fruits, *mopane* worms, crickets, mice, birds and leaves are available in this zone, mostly just after harvest time. *Nyii* and guavas are plentiful in January and February.



Wealth Breakdown

Wealth in this zone depends on the area and quality of land cultivated, the number of animals owned and the remittances received from family members working elsewhere. Poor households cultivate by hand; better off households cultivate with plough and oxen (or donkey). They also hire labor during peak agricultural times. Nearly all households own at least some goats. The poor own a scant 1 or 2 goats whereas the better off might own up to 10 goats, a few sheep, 5-10 cattle and some donkeys for transport.

Sources of Food

Despite the unreliability of the rainfall, own crop production is proportionately the most important food source for better off households. Small grain cereals and maize dominate cropping patterns. Lowland cash crops (cotton and groundnuts) also figure highly. By contrast, the poor produce some maize but mostly they purchase their food on the market. Dry spells are a common hazard here. However the recent series of particularly dry years forced all households to rely much more on the market for food. Due to drought, most households also received food aid. Food purchases and own crop production are supplemented by wild foods (such as *mauyu*, *nyii* and honey), which are prevalent in the zone although they are not high in energy value. Goats and cattle are kept for a cash reserve as well as for animal traction but supply little direct food (milk or meat).

Sources of Cash

The poor rely on a diverse set of cash income sources including seasonal and/or contract employment. Sales of kitchen garden produce, cereal crops, wild fruit and honey, crafts, indigenous wood and goats are smaller but important cash earners as well. Beer is commonly brewed throughout the zone by the women. While some is reserved for traditional ceremonies, other times it is brewed for sale within the village and the women use the income to pay for school fees or clothing for their children. Gold panning is practiced by households within this zone but not on a wide scale. Handicrafts are sold along the main roads that pass through the zone.

The picture is significantly different for the middle-income and better off households. These better off groups depend on remittances, cash crop sales and livestock sales to earn an income. Cash crops have a number of drawbacks. If international demand and price for cotton fall for example, farmers will not be able to recoup their costs. In recent years, sunflower seeds have been affected by a widespread fungal disease that led to greatly reduced yields.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- HIV/AIDS infection is a risk to the household economy in this area, as is malaria.
- Farmers also face the regular risk of pests which attack their crops such as quelea birds which eat millet as it is ripening. The zone is also known for its erratic rainfall.
- Exposure to local and international market fluctuations poses a significant hazard for livelihood security.

Periodic hazards:

- During a decade, roughly 1-3 years will be considered drought years.
- Livestock diseases affect local herds annually but only become severe occasionally.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increase in the sales of livestock
- Increased reliance on gifts of cash or food from relatives working in town or from the better off in the village
- Increase in the manufacture and sale of handicrafts
- Increased migration of able-bodied men to urban centers to look for work.
- Increased reliance on purchased maize
- Increased reliance on barter rather than on cash sales

Distress strategies:

- Reduction in the number of meals and the quantity of food consumed per day
- Increase in theft of property including cattle
- Reduction in expenditure on essential non-food items and services including on health care
- People look for cereal to buy from outside of the village

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Increase in the number of people who are looking for work, leading to a decrease in the local daily rate for labor.
- Increase in the number of animals sold, often leading to a reduction in the sale price, also affecting the terms of trade for cereal.
- Lower than usual harvests of staple crops such as sorghum, groundnuts and maize, pushing the price up beyond the daily wage rate.
- Increased quantity of maize purchased, especially from outside of the community.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 16: Matabeleland Middleveld and Highveld Communal

Main Conclusions and Implications

Livelihoods in this zone are characterized by rain-fed cultivation of staple cereals supported by income earned from animal husbandry, local employment, gold panning and limited cash cropping. Proximity to wildlife areas encourages hunting of wild game as a source of both food and income. Although this zone is primarily agricultural, poorer households, with small farms and limited access to farming inputs and labor, depend chiefly on the markets; for employment and to purchase their food.

Zone Description

This livelihood zone covers communal lands in the south west of the country which fall in the following districts: northern Matobo, northern Gwanda, Umguza, Bubi, Umzingwane, southern Insiza and western Mberengwa. The land is classified as Natural Region IV and has an annual average rainfall of around 650 mm. It has relatively more agricultural potential than neighboring zones to the south in Natural Region V. Overall, livelihoods are characterized by the rain-fed cultivation of maize and other small grains. Cropping is supplemented by animal husbandry and various income generating activities including small scale gold panning on the various rivers (Tuli, Runde, Ngezi, Mundi, Umzingwane and Mwenezi), tantalite mining, beer brewing and employment. Cash cropping is carried out on a limited scale. Livestock herds are generally larger than further north of the country, reflecting the availability of grazing land here. Neighboring zones include many wildlife ranches and the animals often roam across and destroy the crops. One advantage, however, is that there are more animals available to hunt and this provides a valuable source of food especially for the poorer households. While most of the employment opportunities are found within Zimbabwe - either seasonal local work or migration to urban centers- a few people also seek work in South Africa and Botswana.

With the recent land redistribution program, some of the neighboring large-scale commercial farms have been sub-divided into smaller farm lots and given to new owners. In particular, those farms designated as '*A1 villagized*' have been included in this zone. This has entailed broadening the boundaries of the zone, and the wealth groups will need to be updated to take account of the new A1 farmers. This profile concentrates on the communal farmers.

The situation of the workers on the former large-scale commercial farms and ranches has changed; some are still employed on the farms, some have been resettled and others have relocated elsewhere. It is still unclear how many fall within each of the above categories.

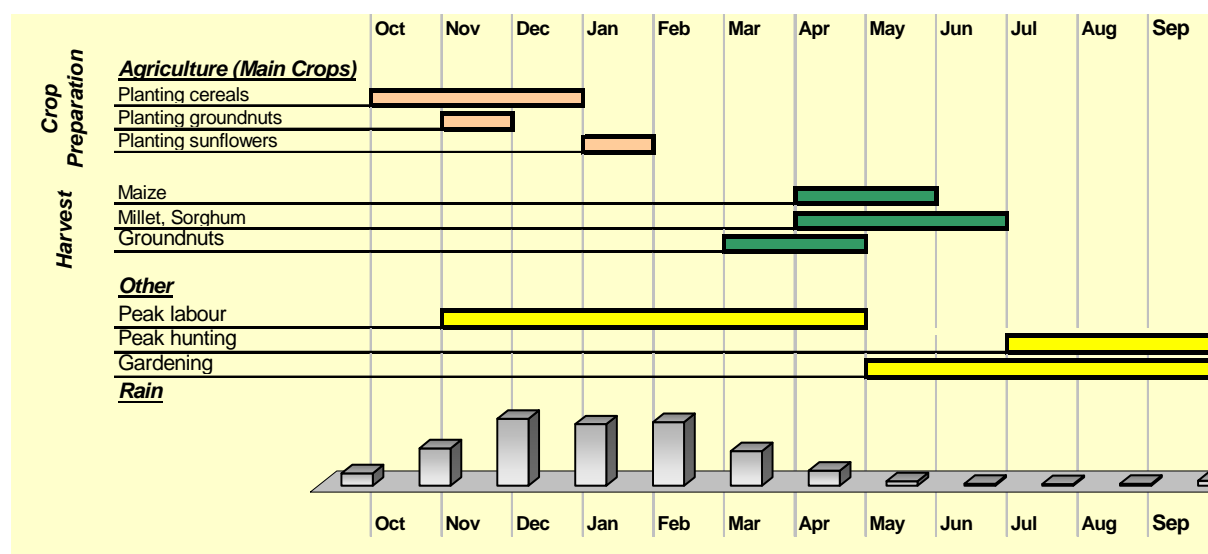
Markets

For households in this southern zone, their main marketing opportunities lie in towns including Zvishavane and Bulawayo. Bulawayo is Zimbabwe's second largest city and it supports a number of food industries. For example sorghum is sold to the brewery and sunflowers to Lever Brothers. Cereals are also traded through Grain Marketing Board (GMB) outlets which exist at the larger urban centers throughout the zone (the GMB is a Government parastatal). Cotton is sold to ginneries in Kadoma and Chiredzi. Local butcheries, local beef committees and agents of the Cold Storage Commission are the main purchasers of cattle. Vegetables are sold at local and urban markets. During the rainy season, some of the rural roads can become difficult to drive along and this limits the movement of goods into the zone, particularly of food.

While there are local seasonal opportunities for employment, people also look further a field in urban centers within Zimbabwe or, occasionally, in South Africa and Botswana. Gold panning takes place in the rivers or in local disused mines.

Seasonal Calendar

Rain-fed agriculture is practiced in this zone, with maize as the staple crop along side sorghum, millet, groundnuts, bambara nuts, sweet potatoes, cowpeas, pumpkins and melons. The main cash crops are sunflowers, castor beans, vegetables³⁰. Groundnuts and maize are staple food crops but, they are also sold to earn cash. The period of intense agricultural activity coincides with the rainy months between November and April. As this coincides also with the period when food stocks are generally low, poor households have to juggle their time between working in their own fields and working elsewhere to earn an income to meet their immediate needs. The price of maize is generally lowest between March and August, as this is when cereal availability is at its highest. Kitchen gardening is mainly done during the drier months. Livestock are sold chiefly to pay school fees therefore peak sales occur around the start of the school term. After the harvest, kudu, impala, rabbit and wild pigs are the most common animals hunted. Different wild fruits and tubers are available throughout the year. Households usually have a variety of fruit trees within their compounds including mangoes and guavas, which provide variety to the diet and can be sold or given as gifts. In a few areas some households have access to irrigation schemes, but this is a very small percentage of the zone.



Wealth Breakdown

The wealth status of a household is linked to the area of land cultivated, the method of cultivation, the size of their herd and their dependence on the market. Better off households cultivate the largest fields, using animal traction. Middle-income households also make use of animal traction but the poor cultivate by hand. A typical better off household owns 20-30 cattle, around 40 goats and sheep, maybe some pigs and 4-5 donkeys. Poor households usually do not have cattle, but have around 5 goats and some chickens. Resource - poor households have limited access to loans for investment or to cover difficult periods. The better off by contrast, benefit from their higher collateral and are perceived to be more likely to be able to repay money borrowed. Polygamy is fairly common in this zone, mainly among better off households which can afford to pay the bride price; however men usually marry no more than two official wives.

Sources of Food

The chief constraints to agriculture faced by poorer households are access to land and labor. Consequently, their harvests are only able to cover around one third of their needs in a normal year and their most important source of food is the market. Middle-income and better off households have larger land holdings and more labor (including hired labor) so own crop production is their predominant food source covering over two thirds of the year. In addition these households benefit from their larger herds, which contribute milk and meat to their diet. Typically, poor households collect wild fruits almost every day when they are in season and they hunt (sometimes illegally) at least once week between July and September. While some of this is for sale, most is for their own consumption. Such households also benefit from gifts of food from better off neighbors and food aid programs aimed both at the poorest members of the community and at socially disadvantaged people.

³⁰ Paprika used to be cultivated on a relatively wide scale in this zone but this crop requires a high financial input to cover the cost of seeds and labour therefore many households prefer to cultivate food crops which have a more stable market price.

Sources of Cash

How households earn an income depends on their level of assets and savings (i.e., their wealth status). For instance the income for better off households comes primarily from three sources: (i) the sale of livestock; (ii) remittances from relatives working in town; (iii) the sale of some cash crops and (iv) gold panning. This pattern contrasts with the situation of most poor and middle-income households whose key income sources are employment and gold panning. For example, employment typically contributes around one third of their annual household income. While the poor generally rely on seasonal piece work as their main employment, middle households can afford to travel further to urban centers within Zimbabwe. Poor households are usually targeted by public works cash-for-work programs whenever these occur.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- Rainfall is erratic, which makes it difficult for farmers to plan their agricultural season.
- Livestock diseases are endemic.
- Given its proximity to wildlife ranching areas, parts of this zone are prone to invasion by wild animals that damage crops.
- HIV/AIDS is an endemic problem which limits household labor and increases expenditure on health care.
- The rivers and dams are beginning to silt up as a result of the gold panning activities; this affects water available for livestock and kitchen gardening.

Periodic hazards:

- Roughly every three to five years the zone is affected by a drought which reduces both the harvest and the grazing land.
- Crop pests or veld fires reduce the harvest at least every three years.
- The widespread gold panning leads to hazards such as land slides, animals falling into pits and humans drowning in flooded pits.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increase in the number of people who engage in gold panning
- Gold panning activities start earlier in the year
- Increase in market gardening activities
- Increased sale of animals
- Increased reliance on gifts of food from neighbors and relatives within the community and on food aid programs
- Increase in the number of people looking for local casual employment

Distress strategies:

- Increased requests for food aid programs
- Reduction in the number of meals and the quantity of food (particularly maize) consumed per day

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Increase in the number of people looking for work, which could lead to a drop in the daily wage rate. This is especially serious if it coincides with a period when the price of staple cereals is high.
- Increase in the number of people who are engaging in gold panning.
- Decrease in the yields of maize, which could lead to prices remaining high even just after the harvest. If this coincides with a decrease in the daily wage then people who rely on purchasing food will find difficulty affording it. On the other hand if there is a very high production of maize followed by a drop in cereal prices then farmers might not be able to cover their production costs.
- Increase in the number of animals sold, in particular goats and cattle as this could lead to a decrease in the price per animal. Of particular importance is the terms of trade for cereal compared with livestock.
- When the agricultural season is poor, gold panning starts earlier than usual (February/March rather than May/June).

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 17: Mutorashanga Informal Mining Communities

Main Conclusions and Implications

This profile describes livelihoods on the decline. It tells the story of households in the chrome mining industry who suffer a breathtaking level of exploitation. With the ever increasing prices of basic commodities, this situation does not look likely to improve in the near future. The data presented here are based on a report of a household economy assessment in Mutorashanga by SC-UK.³¹ The reference year used in the assessment was October 2002 to September 2003, which serves as the reference against which to measure changes. At the time, the economy was hit with rampant inflation as well as turmoil in the neighboring commercial agriculture areas. These factors should be taken into account when interpreting the results. When the land redistribution has been finalized and the new farmers are settled, this profile should be updated.

Zone Description

Mutorashanga is the collective name given to the mining communities on the Zvimba side of the Great Dyke. The Great Dyke lies in Mashonaland West Province, north-west of Harare. The mines are surrounded by commercial farms, many of which have been acquired under the Government's Fast Track Land Reform Program, then subdivided into small scale family farms (the A1 model) and larger scale enterprises (the A2 model). Livelihoods in the Mutorashanga zone are centered on the chrome mines, involving a total population of over 7000 people. A large proportion of these workers are young. Their families originated from Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique. They came to Zimbabwe to take work that the local Zimbabweans did not want due to the relatively harsh conditions and poor rate of pay. Two companies have exclusive prospecting rights to chrome along the Great Dyke; Zimbabwe Alloys (a subsidiary of Anglo American Corporation) and Zimbabwe Mining and Smelting Company (ZIMASCO). With the low international market price of chromite since the 1980s, the mining companies leased their claims to smaller operations including cooperatives and tributers who operate at a lower unit cost per tonne of ore by cutting corners on safety precautions and provision of services for their employees. The cooperatives and tributers sell the ore to Zimbabwe Alloys or ZIMASCO and use this income to finance their operations and pay their workers. However, there exists a huge disparity between the money received from the sale of the ore and the minimal payment that the mine workers receive. Moreover salaries are only reviewed on an annual basis – not frequent enough in an economy suffering from rampant inflation – and the increases received have not kept pace with inflation. This disparity – between salary increases and increases in the price of staple food has hit these workers hard and forced them to cut back purchases to the bare essentials (namely staple cereal).

In addition to general mining, miners and their families look for additional work, including chrome picking, which involves searching for ore in the waste material brought to the surface, and taking on leadership positions in the cooperatives or tributaries. Secondary income earning includes selling vegetables, small scale trading and working on nearby commercial or resettled farms. As the newly resettled farms become established it is possible that this will create more income earning opportunities for some households in this zone.

Markets

The main commodity sold is chrome ore. In addition to the main export markets, some ore ends up in Gweru and KweKwe where it is used in the manufacture of high tensile steel. Thatching grass, wild foods, vegetables and worms (for fishing) are sold along the road side to passing vehicles.

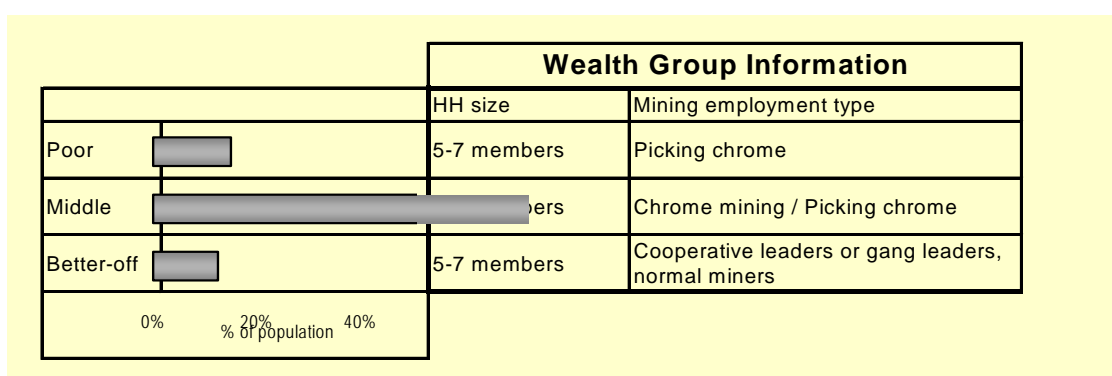
³¹ Save the Children. A1 Resettlement Areas and Mutorashanga Informal Mining Communities. London: Save the Children, 2003.

Seasonal Calendar

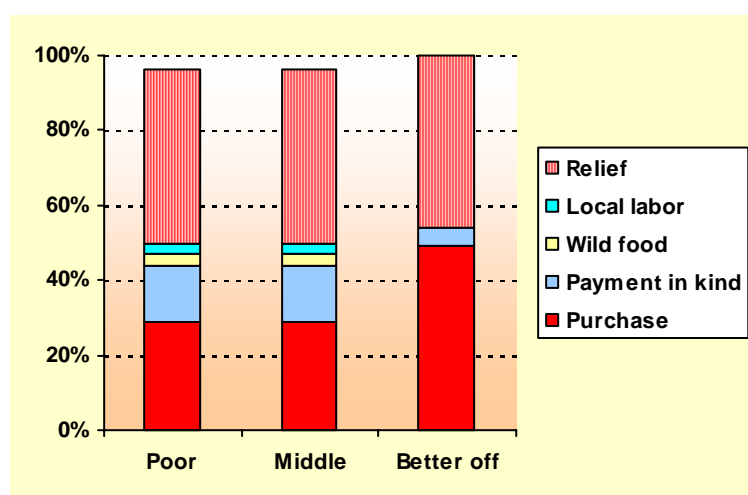
The rainy season runs from the middle of October until the middle of April. During this time the shafts can easily become flooded which means that it becomes harder to mine. Mine workers are paid on the basis of the amount of ore they bring. Typically, a miner is able to extract and sell around 2 tons per month in the dry season and only half a tonne a month in the rainy season. Cooperative leaders and some salaried mine workers receive regular salaries which do not fluctuate throughout the year.

Wealth Breakdown

Wealth in this zone depends on the type of mining activity undertaken - underground mining for instance, compared to chrome picking. Underground mining requires physical power. Therefore it is predominantly a young male activity. Poorer households are those who do not have a young able-bodied male to go mining underground, and who have to instead rely on gleaning or picking chrome from the waste. These households are typically headed by a woman or an elderly person (in many of these households the active male has died from HIV/AIDS). The better off households are those whose main breadwinner is a senior mine worker or leader in the cooperative or who have a second key income source such as owning a small shop. In the middle and largest wealth group are the general miners whose wives supplement the household income through a variety of other activities including gleaning, petty trade and selling vegetables. Children from better off households have the opportunity to go to secondary school while the related expenses are too high for middle or poor households whose children only go as far as primary school.



Sources of Food



The informal mining households in this zone do not have access to land to cultivate. Therefore most of their food is purchased. Food purchases are supplemented seasonally with wild foods. Poorer households, who do not earn enough income from mine picking to purchase enough food, take on additional work (usually agricultural) in exchange for food. They also glean wheat from commercial farms although this latter source is likely to cease as the farm owners have started to burn their fields after harvest. Soaring inflation rates in recent years however means that mining income has not kept pace with the increasing cost of food. During the reference year, incomes were unable to cover basic needs. Therefore food aid made a significant contribution to all households although even with the food aid poor and middle-income households did not

meet their minimum calorie requirements. Whereas better off households purchase both staple foods as well as limited non staple foods including *kapenta* (dried fish) vegetables and sugar, middle-income households cannot afford *kapenta* and the poor limit their purchases to the staple grain only.

Sources of Cash



In this zone household earn an income to buy food, rather than grow it. Hence household labor capacity clearly determines how much income is earned in a year. In addition, the type of activity determines the wealth group. Poor households earn almost three quarters of their annual income through a variety of casual jobs. These jobs include agricultural labor on nearby farms, fishing, grass sales and selling wild fruits. While middle-income households also engage in such activities, more than three quarters of their (larger) income comes from mining. There are large fluctuations in the amount of money earned per tonne of ore, and payments can be irregular. However they can extract far more per month than can an individual who is picking. A typical chrome picker finds around a quarter of a tonne per month.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- HIV/AIDS is a serious problem which affects peoples' ability to work.
- Wage rates for mining employment are not reviewed sufficiently often nor do they rise in line with inflation.
- With the lax security measures, injury or even death through cyanide gas intoxication or collapsing mines are risks that the miners face every time they go underground.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Reduction in expenditure on household items and food
- Reduction in household expenditure on children's education beyond primary school
- Increased collection and sale of wild fruits, thatching grass, vegetables and worms for fishing.
- Reduction in dietary diversity
- Gathering wheat left over in commercial farms

Distress strategies:

- Increased reliance on food aid
- Decrease in household expenditure to below minimum acceptable level (for example just a small quantity (250g) of soap for a household of 6 people per month and no Vaseline to protect the skin)
- Children withdrawn from school
- Non-payment of rental accommodation which could lead to eviction

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Employment wage not increasing in line with inflation
- Increasing price of maize, especially if it increases more than peoples' wages
- Non availability of maize at Grain Marketing Board outlets or local shops

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 18: Mwenezi, Central Chivi and South Midlands Communal

Main Conclusions and Implications

Livelihoods in this zone depend heavily on employment, remittances and gold panning and to a lesser extent on agriculture and animal husbandry. This area is relatively resource-poor. Certainly, rainfall is too erratic to produce reliable harvests. Despite being a lowland zone, livelihoods are not agro-pastoralist (unlike in Beitbridge, further south). Relief is distributed with regular frequency in this zone (for example an estimated 4-7 years out of every ten) which points to conditions of chronic poverty in the area.

Zone Description

This zone is situated in the lowveld of South-Central Zimbabwe. It encompasses communal lands in several districts including Mwenezi, Southern Mberengwa, South Zvishavane and Central Chivi. The area is classified as Natural Region V. Annual rainfall is low, around 500-600 mm/year and the soil is poor and prone to erosion. Despite being better suited for animal husbandry, this is not an agropastoralist zone. Instead, households combine some cereal and cash cropping (a precarious venture in such lowland areas) with market purchases. The key to food security in this zone is the capacity of households to earn enough cash to purchase food during the year. The work opportunities are varied and include local casual seasonal labor and temporary or permanent migration to plantations or towns within Zimbabwe or South Africa. The main rivers that pass through this zone include Ngezi, Tokwe and Runde. These rivers provide opportunities for irrigation, gold panning and fishing. The newly opened diamond mine in Mrowa provides some local income earning opportunities. The Manyuchi irrigation scheme benefits a small percentage of the population of this zone while the associated Manyuchi dam provides some fishing opportunities for households nearby. Heavy vehicles frequent the main roads in the zone, heading between South Africa and Harare.

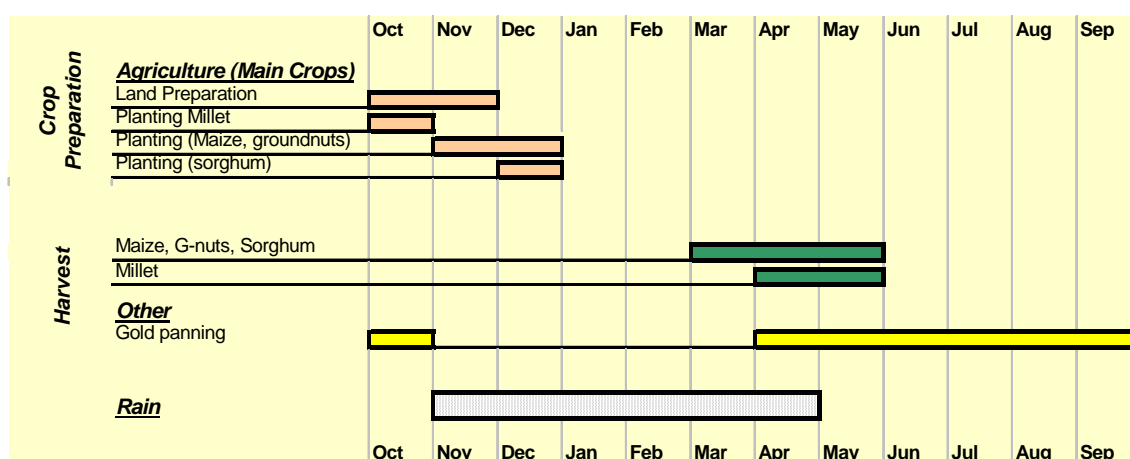
Markets

Cereals are traded through the Grain Marketing Board which has outlets in Masvingo, Chivi, Zvishavane, Mataga, Gweru and Bulawayo. Cotton is sold at depots in Triangle, Ngundu, Chivi Growth Point and Mutare. The roads linking these depots to the communal areas are generally poor, adding to the cost of purchasing maize from there. Prices of cereals are generally at their lowest between March and August, linked to the increased availability of food at harvest time. Animals are sold usually to private buyers and local butchers. Beer is sold within the villages and handicrafts are usually sold along the tarmac roads.

Opportunities for labor include casual local village work; seasonal farm work for local better off households; farm work on the sugar plantations in Chiredzi; and casual or permanent jobs in the asbestos mines in Zvishavane or in South Africa. The Mrowa Diamond mine and Sabi gold mine employ many people from within the zone.

Seasonal Calendar

The main crops cultivated are millet, maize, sorghum, cowpeas and groundnuts. Some farmers cultivate sunflowers which are planted in December/January and harvested at the same time as the cereals. This crop recently has been on the decline because of a widespread fungal disease that attacked the seeds. Although maize is harvested around March, it can be eaten green straight from the fields from February. This helps to bridge the food gap until the main harvest is ready. Winter plowing, just after the harvest has been shown to greatly enhance crop yields in the next growing season because moisture and compost are dug deep into the soil. Only those farmers with access to animal traction engage in this. Prices of maize and other cereals are highest between September and February; this is when household food stocks are generally low. The main cultivation period for cotton is between November and May. Various wild fruits, *mopane* worms and termites are available throughout the year, and make a valuable contribution to the diet of poorer households.



Wealth Breakdown

Wealth in this zone depends primarily on access to employment and remittance opportunities. The better off households are those who have a family member sending remittances from South Africa or urban centers within Zimbabwe. Poor households on the other hand take on less lucrative jobs such as local farm work on neighbors' fields or in nearby commercial sugar estates. Other factors linked to wealth include the size of land cultivated, access to tools and labor and the size of the animal herd. Almost all households own some animals but while the poor tend to own goats and chickens, the middle and better off own cattle, oxen, goats and donkeys.

Sources of Food

During most of the year, poor households rely on the market to buy their food. They supplement market purchases with some crop production and wild foods. Only the poorer households tend to go fishing in the rivers and seasonal streams although this is not a significant food source for them. By contrast, own crop production is proportionately the most important food source for middle-income and better off households – at least, when rainfall is adequate. The main crops grown include cereals such as sorghum, millet and maize as well as some cash crops including cotton and groundnuts. However rainfall in this zone is largely unreliable. Livestock provide some safety net; they can be sold for cash to buy cereal and they also supply some meat and milk. Traditionally, many households within the zone receive government assistance in the form of food aid or supplementary feeding programs targeted to poorer households. The rich also give gifts to their poorer neighbors, especially during the hunger period just before the maize ripens.

Sources of Cash

The most important source of cash income is employment. The nature of this employment and the resulting levels of earnings differ by wealth group. Poor households for example mostly find local seasonal casual work on nearby commercial farms or on neighbors' farms. These wages are supplemented by gold panning, sales of beer and sales of handicrafts (stone and wood carvings). Family members from better off households by contrast usually have more permanent jobs in the skilled 'formal' sector. Some of their wage earnings are remitted home. Better off households supplement remittances with sales of cash crops and livestock. In some years, significant numbers of *mopane* worms are harvested from the nearby newly resettled areas. Households living near to the Manyuchi irrigation scheme sell fish caught in the dam.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- Unfortunately the migratory nature of livelihoods in this zone means that there is a serious problem of HIV/AIDS infection.
- Crops in the zone are also prone to attacks by pests on a regular basis.
- Gold panning activities have created gullies and increased the risk of soil erosion and land slides.
- Mining activities are associated with lung infections from the dust.
- Livestock diseases are endemic in this zone.
- Reliance on employment for income lowers households' standard of living because wages earned do not keep up with inflation.

Periodic hazards:

- Over a 10 year period, the rainfall is below average in roughly four to seven years.
- Flooding is another hazard, especially of the rivers, and at such times people and livestock have been known to drown.
- Cholera and Bilharzia occasionally affect people in this zone, especially those living and working near to irrigation schemes.
- Road accidents are common due to the heavy traffic passing through the zone, affecting both humans and livestock.

Response Strategies**Expansion of existing strategies:**

- Increase in remittances. These are sent by family members and neighbors working in towns or in South Africa.
- Increased gold panning
- Increased reliance on irrigation schemes where they exist
- Increased migration to urban centers to look for work
- Increased purchase of maize at GMB outlets

Distress strategies:

- Children are withdrawn from school
- Reduced expenditure on health care

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Increase in the number of people looking for work, which leads to a drop in the daily wage rate.
- High prices for cereal crops, especially in comparison with daily wage rates.
- Increase in the number of people turning to gold panning. This reduces the household labor available for farming activities.
- Maize and other cereal harvests – reduced yields and relatively small area planted indicate that there could be a problem, which might be linked to household labor availability or to climate.
- Drop in prices for livestock and main cash crops in particular cotton, sorghum. This is particularly serious when it occurs at the same time as an increase in the price of maize.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 19: Northern Zambezi Valley Communal

Main Conclusions and Implications

Farmers' livelihoods in this communal area are tied to the market as cotton for export is grown throughout the region as well as the staple food crop maize. Household income therefore fluctuates according to prices on the international cotton market as well as according to harvest outcome. In this zone, most households cannot cover their annual food needs from own-crop production alone. In particular, during much of the year poorer households purchase their food from the market. Reliance on market purchases exposes these households to the current high rate of inflation, making it difficult for them to afford sufficient food. Their predicament is that local wage rates and 'farm gate' cotton prices have not increased in line with the soaring price of staple grains.

Zone Description

This low lying zone in the far north east of the country is bordered by the Zambezi River and Mozambique to the north and Mana Pools National Park to the west. As a result incursions by wild life – either from the river or from the park - are a regular hazard faced by people living in the valley. The main livelihood activity is rain-fed agriculture, including both food and cash crops. Total production figures for various crops in this area fluctuate annually in response to both the rainfall, which can be erratic, and international market trends. Cotton is the main cash crop grown is cotton and prices are dictated by the international market place. When prices are low, it makes more economic sense to grow cereals or groundnuts instead. The main cereals grown are small grains (sorghum, pearl and finger millet) which can better withstand the occasional droughts in this area. Livestock, in particular small ruminants, also feature in the household economy, although both the risk of diseases (transmitted by the tsetse fly), as well as shortages of grazing land, limit livestock production in this area. Guinea fowl are gaining popularity over chickens because they are resistant to Newcastle Disease. In general soils are quite rich but rainfall is low, averaging 450-650 mm/year. The zone is classified as Natural Region IV. Fishing is only a common activity for those households living close to the Zambezi River; the majority of households in the valley are too far to make this activity worthwhile. The zone covers three administrative districts: Lower Gुरुve, Muzarabani (Centenary) and Mount Darwin. The cotton producing potential of this zone has led to a movement of households into the valley from the escarpment to the south. The *masawu* is a non-cultivated fruit which grows widely in this zone and is an important sources of both food and cash income to all households.

Markets

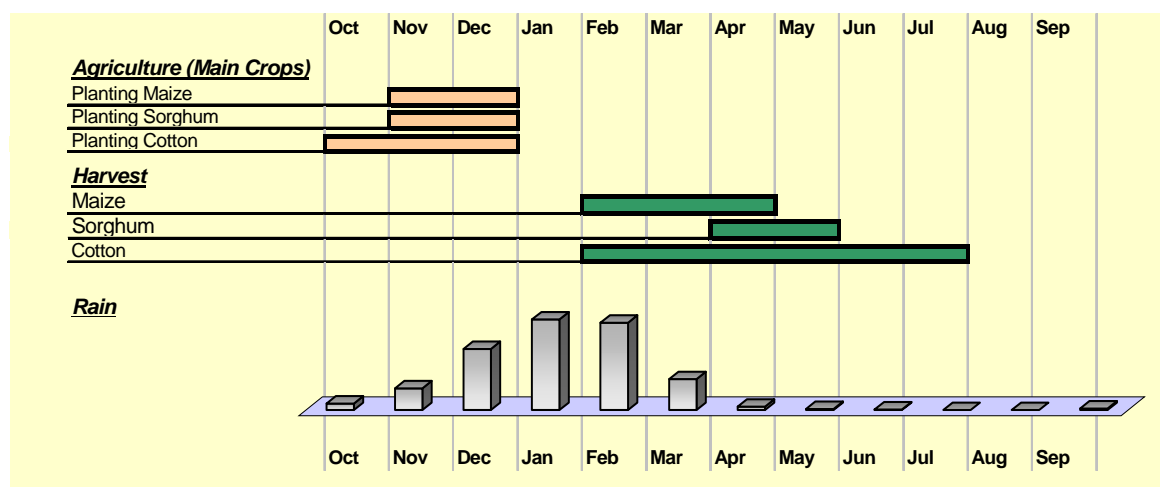
Cattle are sold to middle men who act as agents for the Cold Storage Commission. Most cattle are destined for Harare. Cotton is sold in Mazarabani and Machaya towns while staple cereals are traded mainly through the Grain Marketing Board. Overall this zone does not produce enough maize to meet its needs therefore it relies on maize which has been produced in the Central and Northern Semi Intensive, Highveld Prime Communal and A1 Prime Communal Zones. Maize grown in other zones is perceived to taste better because it grows more slowly. Traders from Mozambique and Zambia sell fish here.

Cotton cultivation requires a relatively large labor force therefore there is a good labor market within the zone, and people can also find employment in the nearby commercial farms. Some households have a family member who is working Harare, Mvurwi, Bindura or Centenary.

Seasonal Calendar

The main staple food crops grown are small grains including sorghum and millet (both finger and pearl). In addition, some limited maize is grown although it does not do well in this relatively dry zone. Groundnuts are grown as both a food and a cash crop. In a normal year the harvest lasts the majority of households around three quarters of the year; thereafter they rely on the market. The cultivation of cotton takes up most of the year, starting in early October with dry planting. If farmers waited until the rains to plant their cotton the growing season would be too short. Overall, the growing season of all crops in this zone is shorter than in other

zones; the plants grow faster in the higher temperatures here. There are many different types of wild foods including fruits, leaves and small animals that can be found at various times throughout the year. Some of these can be preserved and stored for consumption or sale later on. Livestock sales can occur at any time, but they peak just before the main Moslem festivals as this zone furnishes the community in Harare.



Wealth Breakdown

Four factors – (i) land cultivated; (ii) animal holdings; (iii) access to labor; and (iv) income from remittances or trade – are the major determinants of wealth in this zone. Typically a better off household owns a herd of 15-20 cattle as well as around 60 goats and sheep. Poor households usually own chickens and a few (less than 5) goats. Both middle-income and better off households have animal traction which both improves crop output and increases their income (animals are rented out to other farmers for a fee). In a normal year better off households employ people (usually from poor households) to work in their fields, thereby increasing their labor force and improving their chances of a good harvest.

Sources of Food

Households in this zone obtain their food chiefly through two main activities: cultivation and purchase. The relative importance of each of these depends on wealth group. Middle-income and better off households produce enough food to cover about three quarters of their annual food needs (this is the amount they have left to eat after selling a proportion of the harvest). Poor households on the other hand depend on the market for most of their food because their staple crop production is sufficient to cover only around one third of their annual food needs. Poor households also gather wild foods and hunt small animals during the year. Gathered *masawu* fruits contribute a valuable addition to the quality of the diet. The poorest households receive small quantities of gifts in the form of food from better off neighbors and relatives.

Sources of Cash

Employment and sales of cash crops stand out as the two main cash income sources in the zone. With larger fields, animal traction and other inputs, better off households earn nearly all of their annual income from crop sales (this drops down to half of annual income for middle-income households). Animal sales and small scale commerce are other means by which the better off earn money. The poor depend heavily on local employment to make a living. They either do local piece work for better off neighbors or find casual work on nearby commercial farms. This work is supplemented by income from occasional chicken sales, brewing beer, selling firewood, making bricks, and selling wild foods, in particular *masawu* fruits.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- Crop pests are a regular threat to harvests.
- HIV/AIDS and malaria are both problems in this zone that have serious implications for household labor capacity and expenditure.
- Newcastle disease is endemic in this zone, as are *tsetse* flies, which carry *trypanosomiasis*.

- Exposure to the fluctuations of both local and international commodity markets is a risk to household food security.

Periodic hazards:

- Every two to five years this zone is affected by a drought which severely reduces the harvests, while floods also affect this zone occasionally.
- Along the Zambezi and Musengu Rivers, crocodiles damage crops and kill chickens and guinea fowl, while crops grown near the game reserves are at risk of damage by elephants.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increase in gifts of surplus grain by the better off to poor households
- Increased migration of able-bodied men to urban areas to look for work
- Increased sales of livestock
- Increased gathering of wild foods for sale and consumption, in particular *masawu*

Distress strategies:

- Reduction in the number of meals and the quantity of food consumed in a day
- Requests for gifts of food or participation in food aid programs.

In addition to these strategies mentioned above, a number of mitigation strategies have been put in place. These include fly gate control (barriers placed across the road to ensure that passing vehicles are sprayed against tsetse flies); introduction of permits for livestock movement; increasing emphasis on guinea fowl rather than chickens (guinea fowl are more resistant to Newcastle disease); migration from flood prone areas to higher land for cultivation and cultivation of drought tolerant and short cycle crop varieties.

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Drop in the market prices for cotton, which could mean that farmers are unable to recover their production costs.
- Increase in the price of staple foods, especially when this is not matched by an increased income from cash cropping or employment.
- Increase in the number of people looking for work, either from within the zone or from Mozambique looking for work as agricultural laborers. As well as potentially saturating the labor market this could lead to a decrease in the wage rate earned. Such a situation is worsened if it coincides with a time when staple food prices are high.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 20: Poor Resource Kariba Valley and Kariangwe-Jambezi Communal ^{32 33 34 35 36 37}

Main Conclusions and Implications

Most of the zone is relatively isolated from the rest of the country. This isolation contributes a large part to the overall poverty of the area. The remote location means fewer lucrative employment and market opportunities, as well as higher prices for purchased food and other goods. This hits households hard as agriculture is unreliable, livestock holdings are relatively low and most households must buy their food during the year. To get by, households combine a number of activities. Crop and livestock production provide some food and income although agriculture is very unreliable. Cash cropping (mainly cotton) occurs but is also a risky activity. Vegetable gardening adds some income but more important are earnings from remittances or local jobs. A few areas in Kariangwe-Jambezi are near to the main highway leading to major tourist locations. This proximity offers some trade and work opportunities. The colliery and power company located in the zone also provide opportunities for employment and trade. Food aid is a notable food source for many households, especially during these last few years of drought and high inflation.

Zone Description

This livelihood zone in the north west of the country is perceived as one of the most food insecure areas of Zimbabwe. This reputation comes from poor agricultural potential coupled with the limited cash income earning opportunities for households in this area. This is one of the least developed parts of Zimbabwe in terms of road network and general infrastructure and parts of it are isolated from the rest of the country and hence from the main commodity and labor markets. This isolation is exacerbated whenever fuel shortages lead to increased prices and difficulty of finding transportation. The population is predominantly Tonga. While formerly divided into two separate zones, the livelihood activities and resources available in each are in fact very alike. Consequently they are now combined into one zone. The caveat is that livelihoods are marginally more successful in Kariangwe and Jambezi which are at a higher elevation and slightly closer to tourist locations than in the Kariba Valley. Communal lands included in this zone are in Binga and Hwange Districts.

The area is classified as Natural Region IV and V. The soil is granitic and sandy and has been degraded after years of monocropping without any fallow time. (This may explain why crop yields are on the decline.) Rainfall is erratic and averages at 450-650 mm/year. An important highway runs through the zone, which provides a potential market for the sale of handicrafts, cereals and animals. The proximity to Lake Kariba affords an excellent opportunity to fish for those households with the necessary equipment. The zone also has the potential for cotton cash cropping. Actual production however depends on whether international demand and price are sufficiently high to be worth a farmer's investment. During the reference year production of cotton was very low.

Markets

The main commodity markets are local. Grain is bought and sold through the Government Grain Marketing Board which has outlets within the zone. Livestock are sold to private local butchers and traders who then re-sell the animals to the Cold Storage Commission. Nearer to Victoria Falls, farmers profit from better prices, depending on the tourist market. The main road

³² Data for this profile are based on the reference year 2002-2003. This was a year of relatively poor rainfall and high food insecurity.

³³ Save the Children. April – May 2004. *Household Economy Assessments*. Binga & Nyaminyami (Kariba Rural) Districts, Matabeleland North & Mashonaland West Provinces, Zimbabwe, Final report 31st May 2004.

³⁴ Save the Children. April 2003. *Household Economy Assessments*. Binga & Nyaminyami (Kariba Rural) Districts, Matabeleland North & Mashonaland West Provinces Zimbabwe. Final Report 30 May 2003.

³⁵ Save the Children. May 2002. *Household Economy Assessment*. Nyaminyami (Kariba Rural) District, Mashonaland West Provinces, Zimbabwe, Final report 21st June 2002.

³⁶ Save the Children (UK) & Binga District Drought Relief Committee. May 2001. *Household Economy Assessment*. Binga District, Matabeleland North Zimbabwe-Report date: June 25th 2001.

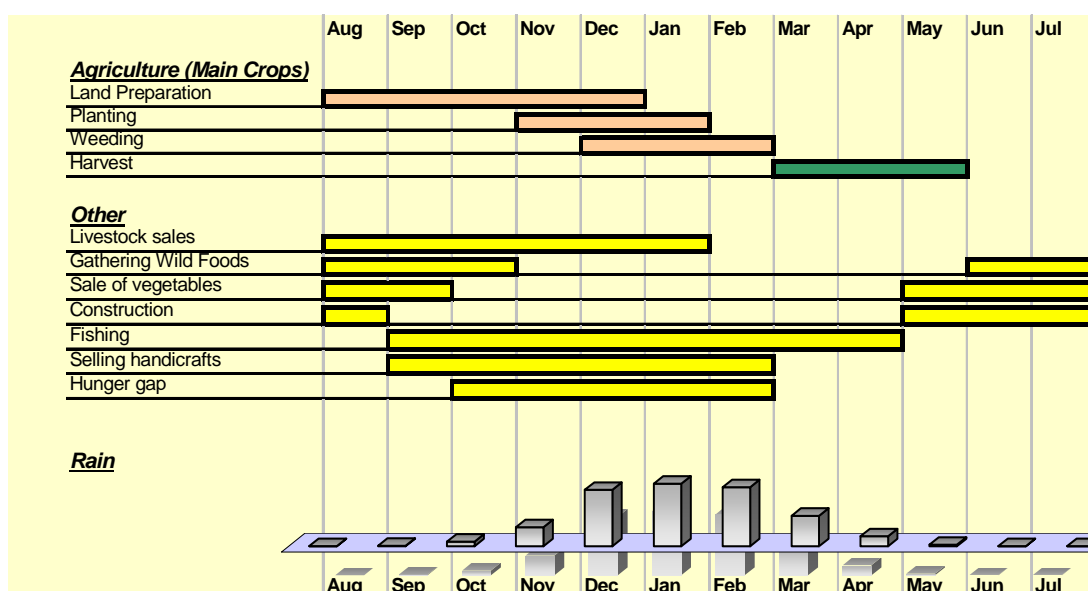
³⁷ Save the Children (UK) - Risk Map Report-Zimbabwe. December 1996 by Julia Earl and William Moseley.

connecting Bulawayo to Victoria Falls and Hwange National Park also provides a reasonable opportunity for the sale of commodities including handicrafts and vegetables, although this is partly dependent on the tourist trade.

Within the more remote parts of the zone, especially in the Kariba Valley, the main employment opportunities are very local and include working in the fields of neighboring better off households. There are also opportunities for work just outside the zone including at Wankie colliery, Zimbabwe Power Company, tourist facilities at Victoria Falls and large farms in Hwange. Some people also move as far as Bulawayo in search of work.

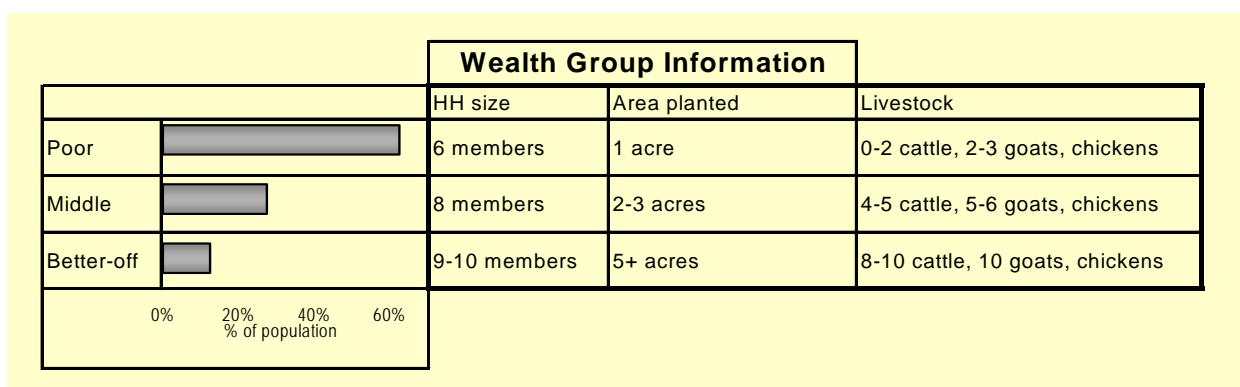
Seasonal Calendar

The months leading up to and during the rains are the times of greatest activity in the fields for land preparation, planting, weeding and harvesting. The main crops grown in this zone are millet, sorghum and maize. Although maize does not do as well as the smaller grains in this arid zone, it has several other advantages, notably that a part of the harvest can be eaten green before the main harvest is ready. This provides a valuable source of food to end the hunger gap when household stocks are traditionally very low. The period of highest livestock sales coincides with the hunger gap which highlights the fact that animals are mainly sold to purchase cereals. Fishing activities are usually only done by men from those households that have access to the necessary equipment. While all the active members of a household are involved in agricultural activities, the sale of livestock is usually carried out by men while women and girls collect wild foods or sell vegetables.

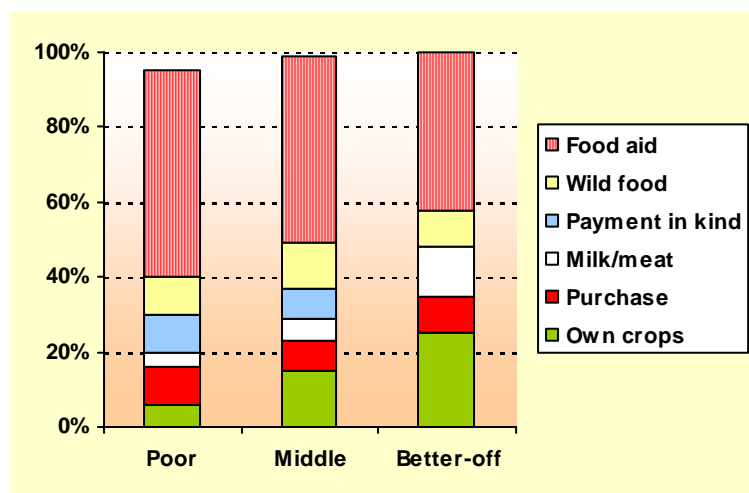


Wealth Breakdown

Wealth in this zone depends on the area of land planted, the number of animals owned and the educational level attained by the children. When most of the population in Binga district was relocated in the late 1950s and early 1960s because of the construction of the Kariba Dam all households were given approximately 3 hectares of land (7-8 acres). Since then land has been sub divided between children. Therefore most households now own smaller plots of land of under a hectare. An additional constraint for poor households is limited time and labor to adequately farm their land. Often, they must meet short term food needs by working for others during the periods of greatest agricultural activity. Moreover unlike better off households, they cannot afford to hire labor. By contrast, better off households not only hire extra labor as needed, they also use animal traction (the poor use hand hoes). It is very rare for a better off household to own a tractor. Those better off households with the means have also started to cultivate cotton (one result is increased local employment opportunities because cotton is a labor-intensive crop). Being 'resource-rich' increases other livelihood options. For instance middle-income and better off households own fishing equipment which improves the quality of their diet. Finally, the educational attainment of children is strongly linked to their potential income earning capabilities. Most children of poor households stop after completing compulsory primary school. Those from middle and better off households usually complete their secondary education (some students go as far as tertiary level). Polygamy is widely practiced in this zone, which increases the household labor capacity and hence has an impact on the household's ability to manage the various labor intensive activities. However bride price is a limiting factor. Most poor men have one or two wives while the better off men usually have more than two wives.



Sources of Food

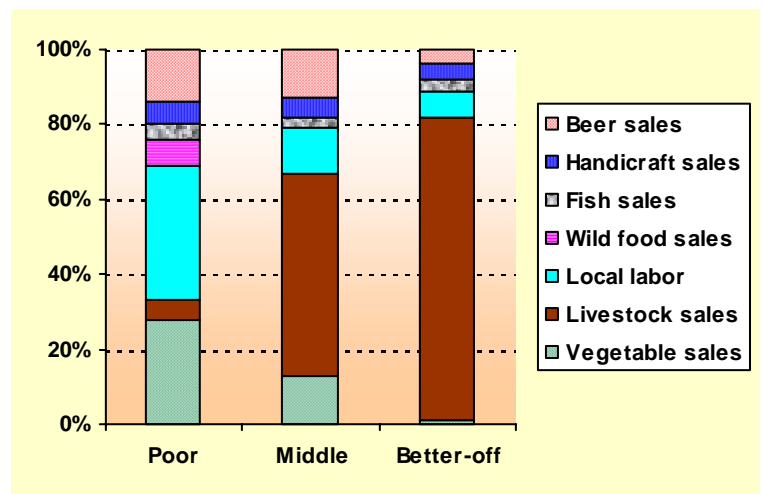


Households in this zone obtain their food via a wide variety of sources. With the recent years of poor rainfall, own crop production has made a minimal contribution to the annual requirement of poor and middle-income households. Even the better off were only able to cover about one quarter of their needs from their own cereal production. In the reference year all households received more than half of their food needs from food aid. Normally only poor households work in return for food. The fact that middle-income households started to do this indicates that they found no other options to cope during the recent difficult year. The availability of such work depends on whether better off households have sufficient capital to employ people. Wild foods such as roots, fruits, tubers and leaves make an important contribution to the diet especially in difficult years, although their availability is reported to

be on the decline. This is linked to the fact that there has not been sufficient rainfall for the plants to multiply. Some of the wild foods apparently do not have a pleasant taste. Their consumption therefore indicates a period of food stress. In 2002-2003 households from all wealth groups purchased foods. At this time, cereal prices were very high due to limited availability. Therefore much of these purchases were paid not in cash but through barter, whereby a goat, or sometimes a chicken, was exchanged in return for buckets of grain. Although fishing is an important activity in the zone, fish consumption is relatively small and therefore does not contribute significantly to household annual food needs.

Sources of Cash

The rampant inflation that has hit Zimbabwe over the past few years makes it difficult to compare income sources even within the same year. These graphs have been calculated using the quantity of maize that could be purchased at the period of the activity, as a proxy for cash income. The most important source of cash for better off and middle-income households is the sale of animals which contributed at least half of their annual income in the reference year. Some of the grain earned through local employment is used to make beer by women in poor and middle households and sold for cash. While sales of fish are shown as a source of income, this is only applicable to households that live near to the lake. The sale of vegetables, in particular tomatoes and rape, was a reasonably good income earner due to their scarcity and hence their high sale price. Note on the graph at the right, the sale of vegetables appears to be at a much larger scale for poor compared with middle-income households. This is only in terms of the proportion of their total income. In absolute terms middle households earn more money from selling vegetables than do the poor.



Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- With the large numbers of wildlife in the area, this is a regular threat to farmers, when the animals damage or consume crops.
- The CAMPFIRE project is working with them to control the problem. The rain is erratic and usually very low.

Periodic hazards:

- Periodic droughts are common in this zone.
- Around the Kariba Valley there is also the occasional risk of flooding.
- Also linked to the presence of the wild animals, there is a risk of animal diseases being transmitted into the domestic herds.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increased sales of livestock
- Increase in looking for employment opportunities
- Increased reliance on wild foods as a source of food and cash
- Reduction in the proportion of household income spent on household items such as soap, candles, matches, Vaseline and fuel

Distress strategies:

- Barter of animals in exchange for food
- Reduction in the number of meals and the quantity of food eaten per day

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Increase in the number of goats and cattle on sale at the markets, usually coinciding with low market prices for the animals.
- Increase in the number of people looking for work, especially when this leads to a reduction in the labor wage rate.
- Lower than average yields of sorghum, maize or millet which could mean that prices remain high even just after the harvest and that they increase beyond peoples' purchasing power thereafter.
- Higher than normal prices of staple cereals, especially when this coincides with poor wage rates or low livestock prices.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 21: Save River Valley and Ndowoyo Communal

Main Conclusions and Implications

Livelihood success in this zone depends on the outcome of agricultural production and animal husbandry as well as on access to employment. Despite good soils, cereal and cash cropping are limited by erratic rainfall. All households own some animals, which provide an essential safety net as they can be sold for cash to buy food when needed.

Zone Description

This flat lowveld zone is located in south-eastern Zimbabwe, namely in Southern Chipinge District within the Middle Save Valley. It is categorized as Natural Regions IV and V. Soils are relatively rich throughout the zone although there are some minor differences³⁸. The limiting factor to agriculture is not soils but rainfall. Throughout the zone there is a low average rainfall of 450-600 mm/year. Agriculture still plays a role in local livelihoods. Households mainly grow dryland cereals (sorghum, finger millet and pearl millet) as well as maize, groundnuts and pumpkins. There is also limited cash crop production of cotton and sunflowers. Small-scale communal irrigation schemes have been developed adjacent to the Save River and nearby households benefit from this to cultivate cash crops such as wheat, soya beans and tomatoes. Cereal cropping is supplemented by remittances, earnings from local employment and livestock sales (in particular goat sales). Households with access to sufficient water supply also try their hand at market gardening. The zone is reasonably close to several commercial fruit and sugar plantations and these plantations absorb a relatively large labor force. Part of the zone shares a border with Mozambique. This position facilitates cross border exchange of goods.

Markets

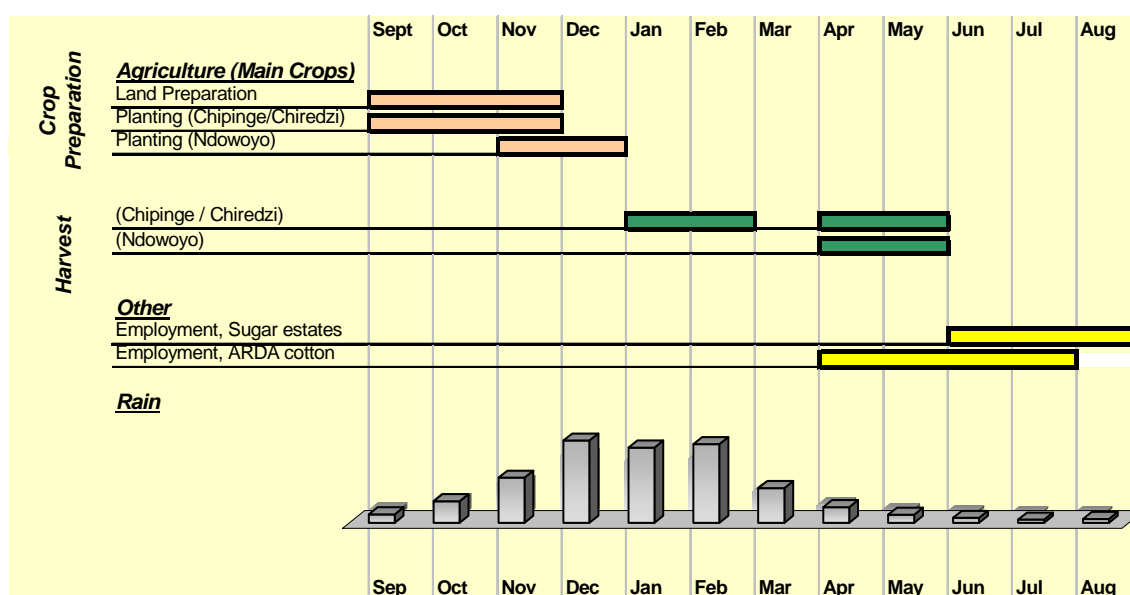
Locally, there are opportunities for people to work in the fields of their better off neighbors. The urban centers of Chiredzi, Chipinge and Mutare provide valuable employment opportunities for households within this zone, as do the commercial sugar plantations in Trangle and Chiredzi. Other employment opportunities are available at the local wildlife and beef ranches or across the border in South Africa.

The main commodities are marketed through the Government parastatals, private individuals and companies. Cereal crops are sold through the Grain Marketing Board in Chipinge and Chiredzi, while the limited cotton produced is sold through Cotton Company of Zimbabwe (COTCO). Chickens and goats are sold locally at village level while cattle are usually sold to the Cold Storage Commission.

Seasonal Calendar

The rain starts and ends slightly later further north east of this zone (in Ndowoyo) compared with around the Save River, so planting and harvesting are slightly earlier here. Households within each part of the zone have the same employment opportunities on the commercial sugar and Agriculture Rural Development Association cotton estates. Land preparation starts in September (Chipinge/Chiredzi) or October (Ndowoyo). A few better off farmers with access to animal traction also do winter plowing in May to July, but this is not common throughout the zone; although it greatly enhances yields it does require access to draught power.

³⁸ For example the soil in Ndowoyo communal area is black vertisol or red clay and prone to gully erosion, in Mutema communal area the soil is gravelly, while that in the Save Riverine area is much more fertile.



Wealth Breakdown

Wealth in this zone depends on two factors: (i) household capacity to cultivate cereal and cash crops and (ii) livestock holdings. Agricultural capacity includes access to sufficient land, labor (family and/or hired), tools and other resources needed to ensure a decent harvest, weather conditions permitting. Better off households own more livestock, in particular goats and cattle as well as donkeys and oxen to help with transport and land preparation. Poor households typically own a few goats and some chickens and only rarely cattle.

Sources of Food

The most important source of food for households in this zone is own crop production. The main crops are sorghum, pearl millet, finger millet and maize. Maize does not do well in dry conditions but it is a crop valued for its flavor and relative ease of preparation. Cereal stocks last much less than a full year. Consequently even better off households rely significantly on other food sources. These include market purchase, collection of wild foods such as *mopane* worms, quelea birds, fruits and leaves especially from the baobab tree. Consumption of own livestock products (milk and meat) contributes only marginally to the household diet (and only in better off households). In the Southern part of Chipinge District there is some limited possibility for hunting wild game in the forests. Households living near to the Save River and other seasonal rivers and irrigation schemes supplement their diet by fishing but this is not typical for the zone as a whole. Even in normal years poorer households depend on gifts of food from neighbors to meet their annual food needs, especially during the hunger gap just before the harvest.

Sources of Cash

The most important source of cash income depends on the wealth group of the household. For example the sale of cash crops is an important income source for better off households as are livestock sales and remittances (i.e., from family members who work in urban areas within Zimbabwe or within South Africa)³⁹. By contrast most of the cash income earned by middle-income and poor households is through employment. There are a number of local employment opportunities. The Agriculture and Rural Development Authority (ARDA, a government parastatal) has schemes in this zone. Poorer households also earn cash through working on the fields of better off neighbors during periods of intensive agricultural activity. Other income sources include brewing beer from sorghum, molding bricks in the winter, collecting thatch and firewood and making and selling local handicrafts such as crocheted mats, baobab fiber mats and baskets. Wild game (e.g., mice, birds) and wild fruits are sold by a few households.

Hazards

³⁹ Cotton production fluctuates depending on international price and demand. These fluctuations mainly affect small scale subsistence farmers rather than the larger ARDA cotton estates which can better absorb the changes in price. Sunflower production has also faced several problems in recent years linked to a widespread fungal disease that limited seed availability.

Chronic hazards:

- Rainfall is unreliable in this zone and the farming period regularly is disrupted when the rain stops mid-season.
- HIV/AIDS infection is a serious problem in this zone.
- Crop pests such as the quelea birds attack cereals in particular millet and wheat (on the irrigation scheme) at harvest time.
- Livestock theft is becoming a regular hazard in this zone.

Periodic hazards:

- Crop pests, drought and floods are problems that occur on an occasional basis in this zone.
- Human diseases including malaria and cholera occasionally strike households within this zone.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increased production of handicrafts for sale
- Increased migration to urban centers or to South Africa and Mozambique to look for work
- Increased reliance on wild foods and poaching of wild animals
- Reduced expenditure on non-essential household items
- Increased sale of livestock

Distress strategies:

- Increased reliance on poaching as a source of cash and (limited) food income
- Theft of cattle
- Reduction in the quantity of food consumed and the number of meals per day
- School children withdrawn from school
- Girls married off early (to earn bride price and reduce the number of dependents in the household)
- Reduced expenditure on essential non-food items and services such as health care

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Increase in the number of people looking for employment as laborers, leading to low daily wage rates.
- High staple grain prices compared with daily wage rates.
- The price of sorghum (in particular) following the harvest does not drop significantly (indicating a poor harvest).
- Poor cotton prices (this especially affect livelihoods in Ndowoyo).
- Low livestock prices. This is especially a problem when it occurs at a time of high cereal prices.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 22: Siabuwa and Nebiri Low Cotton Communal ^{40 41}

Main Conclusions and Implications

This is an agricultural zone, not very high potential, but featuring extensive production of cotton and maize. Farmers also keep livestock for draught power and as an asset to sell when households' food stocks run low. The reference year (as well as those before and after) was characterized by rampant inflation and a high input of food aid. These factors distort the picture of the economy somewhat and should be taken into account when reading the profile described below.

Zone Description

Livelihoods in this zone can be described as an economy of cash and food cropping combined with animal husbandry. Households have access to sufficient land both for cultivation and grazing. The main constraint is labor capacity and many households cultivate only a proportion of their landholding. The zone lies in the north west of the country and has some potential for successful cotton production. This cash crop is favored due to the proximity of Gokwe, an area known for its high cotton production and consequently it has the infrastructure to support cotton farmers. However cash cropping has been a relatively precarious activity over the past few years. At the start of the season farmers have to speculate whether they can cover their production costs once they sell their harvest. The price of cotton depends on the international markets and sometimes it is more economically viable to plant cereals instead of cotton. Therefore the area planted with cotton is not constant every year.

The land varies within the zone and is classified as both Natural Region III and Natural Region V. Annual rainfall averages 450-650 mm/year. Administratively this zone covers part of Siabuwa and Omay communal lands in Binga and Kariba districts. Proximity to Mana Pools and Matusadona National Parks means that animal diseases are easily transmitted from the wild animals. Furthermore the wild animals sometimes raid the herds. These wild animals are also hunted on a small scale by local people and the game meat is kept for food or sold.

In addition to the main cash crop households cultivate cereals such as maize and sorghum and other food crops including pulses and tubers. Recent interventions by locally based NGO and Cotco have helped (mainly poor) beneficiary households retain their livestock which would otherwise have been sold off for food. Overall crop yields in the zone have also increased in recent years, possibly due to higher fertilizer use. Production also increased because food aid beneficiaries could spend more time in their fields working and some households received seeds. The main animals that households own are cattle, goats and sheep.

Markets

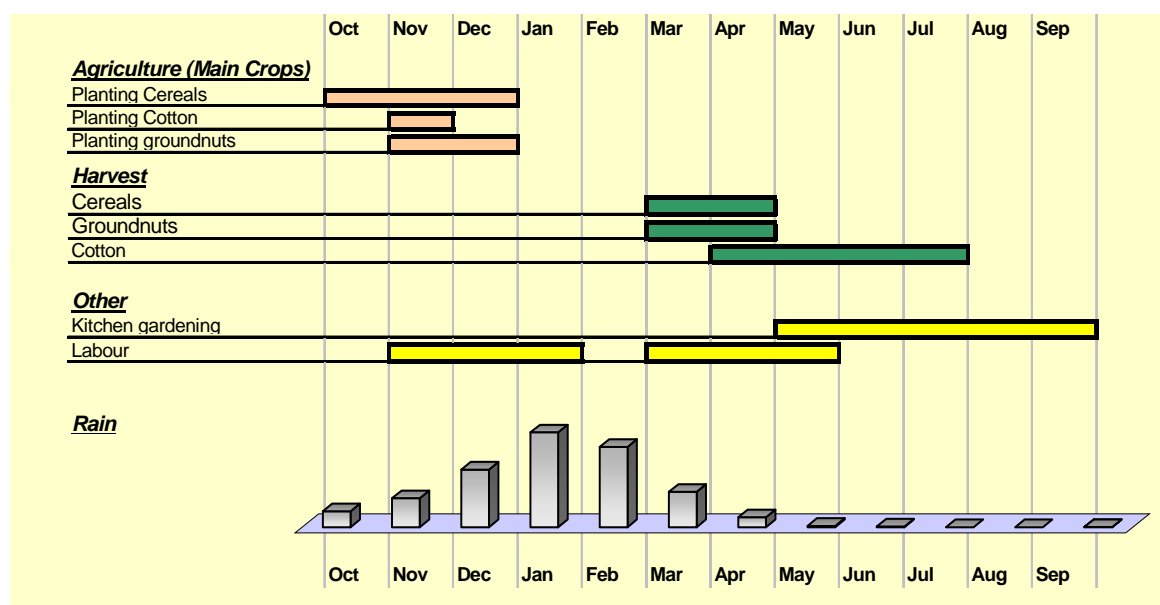
The main cash crops sold are cotton, maize and vegetables. Grain is sold through the local Grain Marketing Board outlets, while cotton is sold to Cotco and Cargill in Gokwe. Most of the employment opportunities that people exploit are local, within the village. Some men however seek work in Hwange, Victoria Falls or as far as the larger urban centers of Harare and Bulawayo.

Seasonal Calendar

The main food crops grown in this zone are maize and sorghum, along with groundnuts and Bambara nuts, sweet potatoes and sugar cane. While mostly grown for consumption, a share of the harvest is sold to raise cash income as well. The main cash crop grown is cotton, although recently sunflowers have been introduced as well. Market gardening is practiced by most households, near water points or on the banks of streams. Between the end of the harvest and the start of the next agricultural season, from April to October, some households engage in gold panning; August is the month when this activity is at its height.

⁴⁰ Save the Children. April – May 2004. *Household Economy Assessments*. Binga & Nyaminyami (Kariba Rural) Districts, Matabeleland North & Mashonaland West Provinces, Zimbabwe, Final report 31st May 2004.

⁴¹ Save the Children (UK) - Risk Map Report-Zimbabwe. December 1996 by Julia Earl and William Moseley.



Wealth Breakdown

Wealth in this zone depends on income earned from the sale of cotton. Better off households cultivate larger areas of land; they have the necessary farming implements to ensure an improved yield and they can afford to pay for extra labor that the work is done on time and the area cultivated is maximized⁴². Poor and middle-income households on the other hand depend on their own labor capacity as they cannot afford to hire labor. In the case of the poor, limited labor capacity for their own crop production is exacerbated by the pressing need to earn an income: the poor are obliged to juggle time on their fields with working for others to earn cash to meet immediate needs. Better off households can afford to invest in longer term planning.

Recently, locally based NGOs and the Cotton Company of Zimbabwe distributed seeds, fertilizer, food aid and credit to, poorer households. This intervention increased their crop yields and overall production. Crop yields for poor households have typically been low, in part because they farm by hand with limited inputs. Sometimes they make local arrangements (for instance working for a better off household) in exchange for access to such equipment.

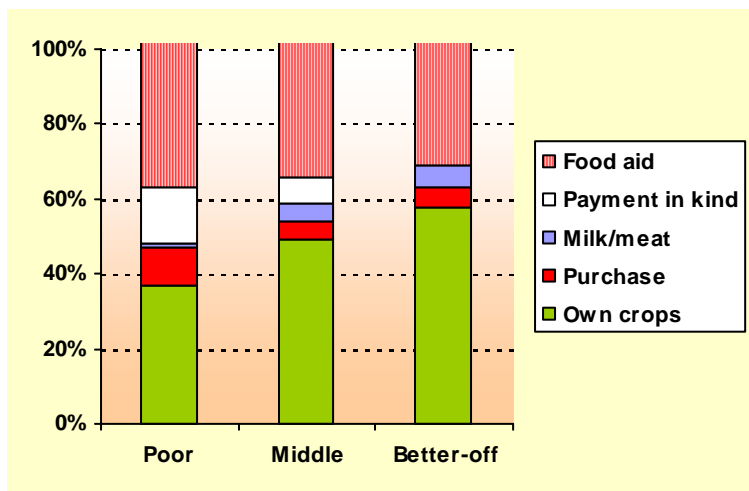
The educational attainment of children is strongly linked to their potential income earning capabilities. Children of poor households tend to stop after completing compulsory primary school, while those from middle-income and better off households usually complete their secondary education. Polygamy is fairly common in this zone. Men from poorer and middle-income households are more likely to have a second wife than richer men. Although the payment of bride price might be seen as a possible constraint to the number of wives a man might have, polygamous marriages also increase the labor capacity of the household.

Wealth Group Information			
	HH size	Area planted and how	Livestock
Poor	5-9 members	2-3 acres, by hand	3-5 goats, chickens
Middle	5 - 8 members	3-4 acres, with some farming equipment	0-2 cattle, 5-10 goats, 1-2 donkeys
Better-off	5 - 8 members	4 - 6 acres with plough, harrow, cultivator	3-4 cattle, 10-20 goats, 3-5 donkeys

0% 20% 40%
% of population

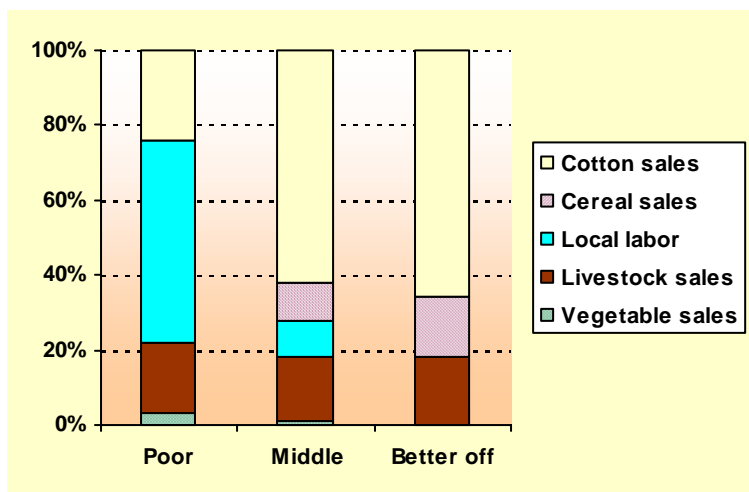
⁴² Recently, diseases affecting cattle and donkeys have particularly affected middle and better off households who normally rely on animal traction during the cultivation period.

Sources of Food



Typically, own crop production is the most important source of food for most households in this zone, albeit less so for the poor who usually depend heavily on the market. The reference year (as well as those before and after) was characterized by rampant inflation, high levels of food aid and consequently lower than usual amounts of food purchased by the poor. Middle-income and better off households usually consume milk and meat from their own herds. Whereas laborers usually work for cash, in the reference year people from poor and some middle-income households also worked for food rather than cash payment. This is represented on the graph as labor exchange. Although wild foods are consumed by many households in this zone they contribute very little in terms of calories therefore this source of food does not appear in the graphs.

Sources of Cash



Due to the high rate of inflation over the past few years, it is difficult to compare income sources even within a twelve month period. These graphs have been calculated using the quantity of maize that could be purchased at the period of the activity, as a proxy for cash income. The pattern of income earning clearly reflects the differences in socio-economic status. Poor households earn most of their annual income through casual work, supplemented by cash earned through the sale of their relatively small cotton production or market gardening. (For all households in this zone, vegetables sales provide very limited income because the market is saturated.) Poor households usually do not sell any of their cereal harvest. Better off households, by contrast, earn most of their income from the sale of their cotton crop, making them dependent on the volatile international market prices. Livestock sales – mainly the sale of chickens and goats rather than cattle, which are kept

as savings - are a second important source of income for middle-income and better off households. Other sources of income for households in this zone include gold panning and the sale of (illegally) hunted wild game. These activities are difficult to quantify and thus are not represented in the graph above.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- Donkeys are often attacked by lions and tsetse fly.
- Livestock disease and crop pests are also regular problems in this zone.
- Farmers face the risk of the unstable cash crop market every year, having to judge in advance whether it is worth concentrating on cotton or maize.
- Wild animals, in particular elephants, attack crops in the Siabuwa area.

Periodic hazards:

- Roughly three to four years within a decade the area is affected by a drought.
- Roughly once in ten years the area is affected by floods.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increased reliance on the collection of wild foods for sale and consumption
- Assistance from better off households to poorer neighbors. This is only on a limited scale.
- Increased poaching of wild animals and sale of game meat

Distress strategies:

- Reduction in the number of meals and the quantity of food eaten per day

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Increase in the number of people looking for work, especially if this leads to a decrease in the daily labor wage rate. This is most serious when the prices of cereal are high.
- Increase in the number of people looking for other means to earn income or food.
- Below average maize and sorghum harvest. This could lead to an increase in the price of such cereals, affecting households who rely on purchasing their staple food.
- Increased numbers of people engaged in gold panning.
- Increased numbers of people engaging in poaching wild animals from nearby game parks.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Zone 23: Western Kalahari Sandveld Communal

Main Conclusions and Implications

Livestock and agriculture are important in this zone, but livelihood success depends essentially on remittances from family members who are employed elsewhere, particularly in South Africa but also in Botswana and urban centers in Zimbabwe.

Zone Description

This arid livelihood zone is in the west of the country, on the border with Botswana near to the Hwange National Park. It encompasses the communal lands of Nata, Maitengwe, Mpimbila, Ingwezi, Mpande, Raditladi, Ramakwebana and Tsholotsho which are within the Bulima, Mangwe and Tsholotsho Districts. It is categorized as Natural Region IV. The zone has relatively poor soils and relatively low annual rainfall of 450-650 mm/year. While the main ethnic group are Kalanga, some San people are living in the southernmost part near the border where they are making the transition from hunting and gathering to more sedentary agriculture. In general, livelihoods in this zone are based on rain-fed grain cultivation mixed with animal husbandry and supported by migration to South Africa and Botswana for work. An important aspect of the household economy is having someone working elsewhere and who remits money to the family remaining in the rural areas. The main crops favored are those that can better withstand the limited rainfall such as millet, sorghum and groundnuts. Maize, cowpeas, beans, melons and pumpkins are also grown⁴³. Livestock holdings are generally higher than further north in Zimbabwe. This reflects the need to diversify in order to survive as conditions do not support successful agriculture. There are no major lakes or rivers to support fishing in the zone.

Markets

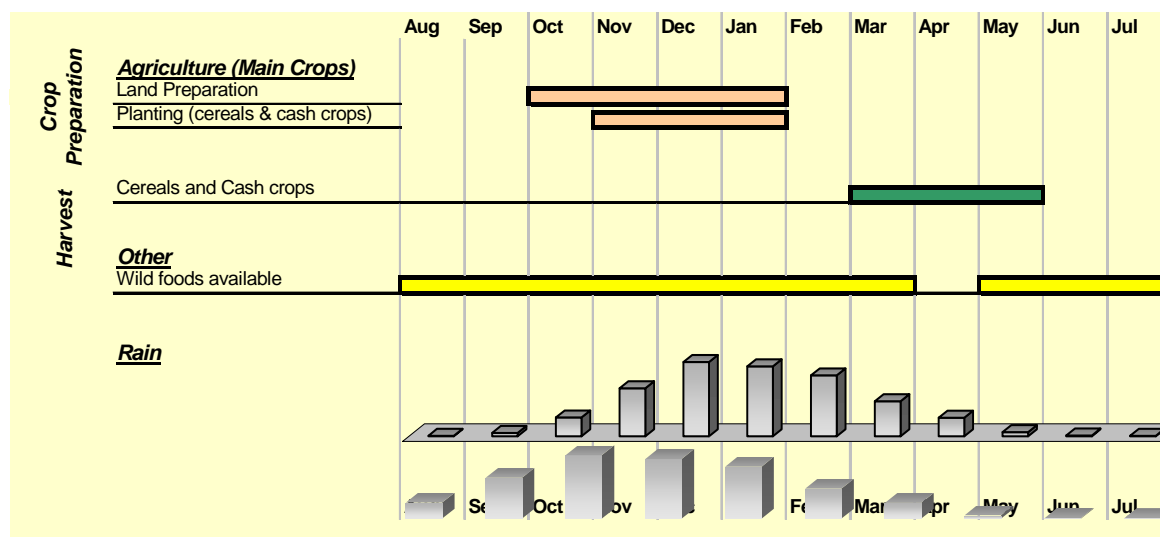
The main labor markets are local, including seasonal daily labor in the fields of richer households and temporary migration to the nearby urban centers including Bulawayo. South Africa provides a key opportunity for employment as does, albeit to a lesser extent, Botswana.

Commodities are mainly exchanged on a local basis. Livestock are generally sold to local butcheries or to private traders who come to the sales auctions organized by rural councils and then take the animals to the abattoirs or Cold Storage Commission in Bulawayo. Cereals and sunflowers are mainly marketed through the Grain Marketing Board outlets which exist in most large towns, or National Foods in Bulawayo. While some farmers sell directly to these outlets, such trade is mostly done through middle men.

Seasonal Calendar

Agricultural activities start with land preparation in October. Some better off households with draught power start preparing their fields as early as August, with winter plowing. This greatly improves yields but requires animal traction to plough in the remains of the previous harvest. The main cereal crops grown are rain-fed millet, sorghum and maize. Maize does not do as well as the smaller grains under such dry conditions. However it can be eaten green before harvest has started, making it a valuable food source when stocks have run out. The main other food crops grown are groundnuts, cowpeas, beans, melons and pumpkins. Some wealthier households also cultivate sunflowers and cotton as a cash crop. There are a number of wild foods available in this zone throughout much of the year. These include fruits, *mopane* worms, mushrooms and some leaves, which make a valuable contribution to the diversity and quality of the diet.

⁴³ There has been some interest in growing cash crops such as cotton and sunflower but the recent few years of poor rainfall, low market prices and fungal disease mean that these crops are now in decline as farmers consider it is economically better to cultivate cereals instead



Wealth Breakdown

Wealth in this zone depends on three factors: (i) the remittances sent home, (ii) the land area cultivated and (iii) animal holdings. Nearly all households own some animals. Poor households usually own a few goats and some chickens. By contrast better off households own around 30 cattle and around 50 small ruminants (sheep and goats) as well as some donkeys for transport and labor in the fields. Success in agriculture depends on land area cultivated as well as access to resources and labor. While poor households rely only on their own family labor, better off households employ people (from among the poor) to work in their fields especially during periods of intense agricultural activity. In addition the better off have the means for animal traction. One of the most important determinants of wealth is access to remittances. All households take advantage of the income opportunities elsewhere in Zimbabwe or in South Africa, as well as, to a more limited extent, in Botswana. Middle-income and better off households tend to have more people who do such work and hence bring in a larger income than poor households. They may also find more lucrative employment than poor households.

Sources of Food

Despite the arid conditions, own crop production is a key source of food for better off households. For example in a year of relatively good rainfall, middle and better off households are able to cover more than half of their annual food needs from their own production. Milk and meat also contribute to the diet of these wealthier households. By contrast, poor households produce a very small harvest. Instead, most of their food is purchased on the market. In addition, in most years poorer households depend on gifts of food to make up remaining food gaps in the year. In a reasonably good year these gifts are limited to food shared by better off neighbors. However, this zone also receives food aid through a number of schemes including school feeding, food for work programs, grain loan schemes and supplementary feeding programs.

Sources of Cash

Poorer household depend heavily on the labor market for their income. Better off households on the other hand have sufficient assets that the sale of crops and / or livestock is sufficient to cover their annual income needs. This group also receives significant income through remittances from family members working across the border in South Africa, Botswana or in urban centers within Zimbabwe. Poorer households usually do not sell cash crops. Instead they sell thatch, baskets, crocheted items, stools, grass and wild foods; activities that the better off households do not engage in.

Hazards

Chronic hazards:

- Erratic rainfall is a regular hazard which limits crop production.
- HIV/AIDS infection is also a major problem throughout this zone.
- This zone is prone to veld fires which can destroy grazing land, as well as predators such as crickets and quelea birds.

Periodic hazards:

- Roughly every three to five years within a decade, rainfall is below average for the zone.

Response Strategies

Expansion of existing strategies:

- Increase in collection and sale of wild foods
- Increase in the sale of livestock

Distress strategies:

- Sale of livestock by households who do not own many animals and who therefore cannot sustain their herds with this level of sales.
- Reduction in the number of meals consumed per day
- Reduction in quantity of food consumed per day
- Increased numbers of people involved in prostitution and theft

Crisis Warning Indicators

- Increase in the number of people migrating to South Africa or Botswana to look for work.
- Increase in the number of people looking for work locally. This could lead to a decrease in the daily wage rate.
- Increase in the prices of staple cereals in particular of maize, especially if this coincides with a decrease in the labor wage rate.
- Increase in the collection and sale of wild foods. For example an increase in the number of people selling *mopane* worms at the local markets, and a decrease in the prices of such commodities.